THE GOLDEN LEGEND

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THE GOLDEN LEGEND

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

TRANSLATED BY

WILLIAM CAXTON

FROM THE LATIN OF

JACOBUS DE VORAGINE

Selected and Edited by

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PREFACE

THE title of this volume—a translation of the Latin words "Legenda Aurea"—recalls the custom in medieval churches and monasteries of gathering into a large volume records of the lives and deaths of saintly personages, and reading them aloud according as the ecclesiastical year brought round their memorial days. The reading due on a particular day would be the "legenda" (*scilicet* "lectio"); and from it the whole volume would be entitled the "legendarium" or (more simply) the "legenda." From the narrative character of these readings, which naturally made a considerable impression on the popular mind, the modern word "legend" gained its circulation and meaning; that its meaning has somewhat deteriorated, implying fiction rather than fact, is not surprising; a similar fate befell our word "story" and the French "histoire."

The "legendæ" of particular churches or monasteries would naturally be of local and limited scope. The thirteenth century—an age of mental awakening—demanded something of wider range. There was a public eager for an encyclopedic volume which should deal in attractive style with the saints of all times and places—their deeds, sufferings, and miracles. The production of such a work required a mind and pen of no common enterprise and ability: these, however, were ready for the work; and the

"Legenda" of Jacobus de Voragine, appearing about the middle of the century, was hailed as "aurea," as "golden" amid the baser metal of all other such repertories.

Of its history more will be said in the subsequent biographical introduction. Its original Latin text (we may here add) is to be found in multitudinous manuscript copies and early printed editions in all the great libraries of the United Kingdom and the Continent; a convenient modern text is that of Graesse, printed at Breslau in 1890.

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Dublin, *October* 1914

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

The Golden Legend brings before us, as we open it, two figures which might well have taken their place among the personages whom its varied pages chronicle. These are Jacobus de Voragine, its author, and William Caxton, its translator. Both names are among those that retain a claim on our kindly remembrance. Both remind us of scenes and events that, though widely out of relation to our own time, may yet well attract and hold our attention.

Jacobus de Voragine

The older man was born in 1228 at a little town not far from Genoa on the Riviera,—Varaggio, where at this day his statue stands a prominent adornment of the Town Hall. At the age of sixteen Giacopo da Varaggio entered a religious order—that of the Friars Preachers, founded by S. Dominic de Guzman some thirty years earlier. That Order had been founded in great measure with the view of combating the dangerous propaganda of the Albigenses, who were gathering influence and armed force in the South of France and who menaced the very existence of Christianity and the stability of States. The Dominicans were mixed up in many stormy episodes and took part in the vigorous methods of repression

which characterized the epoch. Yet their cloisters provided the calm atmosphere for prayer or study or art which could not be found in the world outside, and within them peace-loving souls, such as his who created the *Summa Theologica* or his who was called the 'Angelic' painter of Fiesole, found their leisure and their opportunity. To the same category with Thomas Aquinas and Fra Angelico belonged James of Varaggio, whose name was latinized—somewhat inappropriately—as 'Jacobus de Voragine'—'James of the Whirlpool.' Even when the external peace of his life was shattered, never to be recovered, he manifested both in action and in writing an amiable saintliness which was the aroma of the cloistered life he had unwillingly quitted.

Till the forty-fourth year of his age the career of Jacobus may be summarized as an uneventful one—he studied, wrote, prayed, preached and taught, was Superior of various houses and finally of a province of his Order. He disliked the charge of Superior; but heavier trials were to come. He had just laid aside his provincialate of Lombardy and was looking forward with satisfaction to some years of devotion and work in retirement, when in the year 1288 the archbishop of Genoa died, and the Chapter, assembling to choose his successor, fixed their choice upon the friar. A covetous or ambitious man would have rejoiced at the prospect thus opened up of revenues, palaces and power, but Fra Giacopo saw beneath the mitre only responsibilities which he believed himself too weak to bear. He succeeded in having the burden transferred to more willing shoulders. But it

was only a temporary escape. In four years the See of Genoa was again vacant: the Chapter, supported by the popular voice, again elected him, and this time he had perforce to accept the archiepiscopal dignity. He fully justified the foresight of those who had elected him; unhappily, however, only six years of good works remained to him. The Archbishop was severe to himself and kindly to others. In his charity to the poor, particularly during those terrible pestilences that frequently ravaged mediæval towns, he emulated the examples of those alms-giving Saints whose beneficence and self-sacrifice he has recorded. Among fierce and angry factionists he appeared as an angel of peace and good-will. After three years of ceaseless efforts he succeeded in bringing about a solemn and complete (though, alas, not very durable) reconciliation between the local Guelfs and Ghibellines.[1] In his own *Chronicle of Genoa*, he has given us an account of what happened, saying too little, however, of his own part in bringing about the happy day:—

In the year of our Lord 1295, in the month of January, was concluded a general and universal peace in the City of Genoa, between those who called themselves Mascarati or Ghibellines and Rampini, between whom, truly, the evil spirit had for a long time been stirring up numerous divisions and party quarrels. For sixty years these mischievous dissensions had distracted the city. But, thanks to the special favour of our Lord, all the Genoese have at last returned to peace and con-

[1] The Guelfs were a party who in Italian politics sided with the Popes. Their opponents the Ghibellines were partisans of the Emperors. Their quarrels naturally extended to local affairs and the whole field of public life.

cord in such wise that they have sworn to form henceforth but one body and one fraternity ; which has caused such joy that the whole city was filled with gaiety. We ourself, in the solemn assembly in which the peace was concluded, clad in our pontifical robes, have preached the word of God ; after which, surrounded by our clergy, with four bishops and mitred abbots, we chanted *Te Deum laudamus.*

Alas, these halcyon days were too blissful to last! External firebrands were not slow in re-kindling domestic strife.

But as in this low world there can be no unmixed good—for unmixed good is found in heaven, unmixed evil in hell, and our world is a mingling of good and evil—behold, alas, our harp has had again to change its joyful strains into new laments, and the harmony of our organs has been interrupted by voices full of tears. For in this same year, in the month of December, five days after Christmas, the enemy of man's peace stirred up our citizens to such miserable discord that in the midst of our streets and places they have fallen upon one another with arms in hand : after which followed a great many murders, woundings, burnings, and plunderings. And the blindness of this mutual hatred has gone so far that, in order to gain possession of the tower of one Church of St Laurence, a troop of our citizens has not shrunk from setting fire to the church and wholly consuming its roof. And this destructive conflict has lasted from the fifth day after Christmas to the seventh day of February.

In 1298, at the age of seventy, the apostle of conciliation passed over to the world of peace unalloyed. In his last dispositions he bequeathed the little he possessed to the poor of Genoa : he provided that his body should be laid without pomp in the Dominican cloister whose humble and studious shades he had quitted with reluctance. He left behind him many writings, including (it is said) a translation, subse-

quently lost, of the Holy Scriptures into Italian. Of the *Legenda Aurea*, which at present chiefly concerns us, we shall presently say something more.

William Caxton

William Caxton was also a spiritual light, though one of humbler degree than the saintly Genoese prelate, and though his activities lay along more secular lines. He began life and spent a considerable portion of it as a mercer. Towards the year 1450 he was in touch with the Low Countries, then the most flourishing centres of trade and commerce; and when an English princess became Duchess of Burgundy, he followed her to the Continent, and lived there for some time as a high-placed member of her household. It is not known how he came to take up the work which has rendered him famous—the introduction of the art of printing into his native England. But it is not surprising that a man who combined keen wits and a practical turn with a love of literature should have been strongly impressed by the possibilities of an invention which, in 1470, had become familiar on the Continent along the Rhine, in Paris, in Rome, in Venice. He doubtless felt ashamed that England was lagging so far behind the leaders. Her unsatisfactory and backward state was largely ascribable to the Wars of the Roses, which had lasted some thirty years and caused widespread confusion.[1] They had helped to destroy the tradi-

[1] It is worth remarking, however, that civil wars do not invariably lead to backwardness or decline in letters and arts. Of this ancient Greece and the mediæval Italian republics may afford us sufficient

tions and means of mediæval culture and they impeded the growth of the Renaissance scholarship, One of those who patriotically endeavoured to make the best things of the mind, whether new or old, the possession of the English people was William Caxton. His work at home in England began in 1476, and from that time till his death in 1492, he was indefatigable in bringing out printed books, his pen as well as his presses knowing no rest. Very little, no doubt, of his writing was original, but he rendered a great service to English prose by his numerous translations from the French—then a much more highly developed tongue than English —'from the fair language of France,' as he says, 'which was in prose so well and compendiously written.' He plied the new invention with something of the zealous ardour of the old monastic heroes of the Scriptoria—those multipliers of beautiful manuscripts whose tedious toils, prolonged through so many ages, he was now bringing to a close. His work was extremely wide in its scope. He gave an immensely extended circulation to many romances and tales like the famous *Morte d'Arthur* of Sir Thomas Malory, and brought down upon his memory the reprobation of certain puritan writers, headed by Ascham. His bent was towards the profitable and virtuous, and not inappropriately did the varied procession of his publications close with the biographies of the Fathers of the Church.

examples. On the other hand the intellectual and artistic decline of Germany during and after the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) supplied a parallel to the state of England in Caxton's day;—a parallel which it might be interesting to consider more fully.

Of his *Golden Legend* Caxton tells us something in his introduction. He derived its substance (he tells us) from three sources—one Latin, one French, and one English. The French was his usual original, and in translating it he (and his assistants) seem to have paid but little attention to the primal Latin. Misprints or mistakes occurring in the French have not been set right by reference to the source, but are rendered into English by wrong and occasionally nonsensical translations. An amusing example is found in the life of S. Genevieve. The Saint, during a famine sought to bring provisions 'à navire' (by ship) to Paris. This was misprinted 'a name' which has no sense; but Caxton's translator renders it 'at name,' and a later editor improved this into 'at none'! It must be said, however, that such blunders are not frequent, and Caxton might plead more than one excuse for his shortcomings. Of the English precursor whom Caxton drew upon we know nothing: Caxton refers to his text in a rather slighting fashion, noting especially its incompleteness. Mr Ellis, however, thinks we may see traces of it in the vigorous and un-French style of some portions of the Caxton volume.

Of the present selection, a large proportion does not belong to the original Latin of Jacobus, but was gradually added by later hagiographers. The story of Job, like all those taken from the Bible, is Caxton's own.

For centuries before its appearance in English garb the *Legenda Aurea* had been the most popular of books on the Continent of Europe. No book profited so rapidly by the new invention of printing. Between

1470 and 1500 no less than a hundred separate editions of the original (or augmented) Latin went through the presses of various countries. Nor was any of Caxton's books more frequently reprinted during the half century after its first appearance than his English *Golden Legend*. The book, in truth, supplied the mediæval mind with nearly all it craved for in its literature: how this was so we shall presently consider a little more fully.

But under the two-fold influence of the Renaissance and of Protestantism the vogue and influence of the *Legenda*, in all its forms, rapidly passed away. The Reformers of the sixteenth century, who destroyed the shrines of the Saints, burnt also by thousands the books and manuscripts which glorified them. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the *Legenda* died quite out of general remembrance in England. Elsewhere, if it was mentioned at all by writers of the prevalent modes of thought, it was sneered at by rationalists of the 'Encyclopédie' school as a relic of folly and barbarism, while the Jansenist party in the Church were scandalized by its frequent exemplifications of the Divine mercy towards sinners.

From this neglect and obloquy it was not rescued in England until the year 1900, when Mr F. S. Ellis and Messrs Dent brought out a complete edition of Caxton's work in seven small volumes. In France, about the same time, M. Theodor de Wyzewa translated De Voragine's work into admirable French, and in a long and interesting Introduction highly praised the mediæval author. M. de Wyzewa's work has

had the distinction of being crowned by the French Academy.

Thus has our day shown its willingness to abandon and repair the neglect or contempt of four centuries, a willingness which has encouraged and will (we venture to hope) welcome the production of the present volume. This new receptivity for a book like the *Golden Legend* is not, I think, due so much to any particular 'revival' — religious, 'Gothic,' or romantic—as to a general desire to understand the whole past of the world and to appreciate that past by the first-hand unbiassed study of ancient memorials. It is recognized that in the *Legenda Aurea* and in Caxton's version of it we possess documents of very high value. They are documents—that is to say, 'instructions'—even quite apart from the weight we lay on the objective truth or intrinsic importance of the facts recorded. They open up for us the world of mediæval thought and feeling; and for such unveilings our time shows an honourable eagerness.

But if we are to take up with profit the *Golden Legend* and not risk presently laying it down with tedium or dislike, we shall do well to secure some correct initial ideas as to its nature and conception, and those of the entire class of mediæval literature which it represents. It is meant to be historical. And Jacobus de Voragine shows a sincere desire to separate truth from falsehood and present his readers only with the former. Not seldom does he warn us that he gives a tale with reserves as to its genuineness or accuracy, that there are difficulties in the way of

such and such a pious legend, or that one or other episode seems to him quite incredible. He values objective truth, seeks it, and never wilfully departs from it. Yet undoubtedly the main concern of his book is not literal accuracy nor the balancing of probabilities. As regards probabilities—his standpoint in the face of the worlds visible and invisible, spiritual and material, was that of a Christian who holds unquestioningly the doctrines of his faith. To his mind the world and the fulness thereof belong to God, whose power may at any moment exert itself in ways and by instruments and for purposes quite outside the normal course of natural forces and phenomena, and quite obscure to mere human intelligences. He would have rejected with amazement the notion of limiting Omnipotence within a scientist's table of causes and effects. As to accurate presentment of facts—we ought in the first place to remember that the task which confronted both of our hagiographers was a huge one: that to sift and judge continually the huge mass of hagiographical matter which they selected, not to speak of the incomparably greater mass out of which they selected, would have been a task far surpassing what could have been reasonably required from either busy man —the archbishop or the printer. In their different ways and degrees, they seem to have executed their task with all the care and discretion that could fairly have been expected.

They did even more than their mediæval readers required of them. For there is no doubt that among these (in the mass) there was a notable absence of

that modern critical and analytical spirit which is so anxious to draw a clear and fast line between history and fiction, and which values literal accuracy more highly than the agreeable rounding of a narrative or the effective pointing of a moral. It was not the mediæval instinct to shut things off into compartments. They delighted in juxtapositions which seem to us more curious than admirable; they blended sacred and profane with a boldness which disconcerts both our piety and our worldliness. As regards history and fiction, their favourite intellectual dish was a sort of game-pie where all sorts of wild-fowl lay simmering in the same sauce under the same crust. Samson and the Argonauts, S. Michael and Alexander the Great, lions, bears, and unicorns, miracles and gross episodes, unseemly jests leading up to most edifying conclusions—such strangely-assorted elements jostle each other in the epic or romance, the *gesta* or the *legenda*, and had the advantage of gratifying at the same time a great variety of palates while seriously offending none. We must remember that the mediæval student could be the possessor of extremely few books. Chaucer's 'Clerke of Oxenford' was fortunate in owning so many as twenty. Each volume of such a library would naturally be prized by its possessor in proportion as it was a *multum in parvo*.

About the historical accuracy, therefore, so highly valued by the modern reader, his mediæval predecessor was usually but slightly concerned. To us it seems to make all the difference in the world whether a narrative (one, let us say, meant to point

a moral) is an express relation of actual facts or a pure invention. It does not come natural to us to confound the three provinces of professed history, mere conjecture and pure romance. But to minds of the thirteenth century (in the gross) it was otherwise. The interest, the utility, the charm of the story—these were for them primary considerations; its poetic, rather than its historic truth engaged them.

We have no desire to exalt or glorify this attitude—rather simply to point it out; still it may be interesting to observe how it finds support in some profound considerations and from some high authorities. What Sir Philip Sidney well says of poetry (as opposed to mere didactics or dry records) may be applied to the popular mediæval treatment of history:—

> What philosopher's counsel can so readily direct a prince as the feigned Cyrus in Xenophon; or a virtuous man in all fortunes, as Æneas in Virgil; or a whole common-wealth, as the way of Sir Thomas More's Utopia . . . For the question is whether the feigned image of poetry, or the regular instruction of philosophy hath the more force in teaching.

Passing on from philosophy to history, Sidney instances the parables of Christ Himself as evidences of the superiority of free invention over literal record. He proceeds:—

> If the question be for your own use and learning whether it be better to have a particular act set down as it should be or as it was; then certainly is more doctrinable the feigned Cyrus in Xenophon than the true Cyrus in Justin, and the feigned Æneas in Virgil than the right Æneas in Dares Phrygius.[1]

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[1] It does not in the least weaken the force of Sidney's argument, but is a curious instance of the fluctuations of historical judgments, that this 'right' or historical 'Æneas' has since been shown to be

The greatest of human teachers, Aristotle, whom Sidney here alleges in his support, says:—

> The historian and the poet are distinguished by this—that the one relates what has been, the other what might be. On this account Poetry is a more philosophical and more excellent thing than History. Poetry is chiefly conversant with general truth; History with particular.[1]

The typical writer of the mediæval legend might, therefore, claim the support of Aristotle and Sidney when he thought it was more 'excellent and philosophical' to seek the eternal essence and reality of things than to be eager concerning those particular and transient realities which veil rather than reveal eternal truth.

It would detain us too long to consider the many other ways in which these ancient pages bring us back into the heart of the Middle Ages and set us in contact with its thought and religious feeling. They do not, assuredly, show us everything which lay in that heart: Chaucer, to mention but one author, will afford us much more varied psychological studies. Still less do they show us external brilliancy or pomp: for that we may turn to Froissart. But it is a quite authentic revelation as far as it goes. And if the figures may sometimes remind us of the stiffness and remoteness of those which we see aloft in some well-preserved cathedral window, yet, like these, they are often shot through with a variety of colours borrowed from the pulsing and vivid humanity of the time. Nay more, if they seem to us but faintly

quite as mythical as Virgil's—or rather more so. For Virgil himself was not a myth, but 'Dares the Phrygian' was.

[1] Sidney *An Apologie for Poetrie*, pp. 17-27. Aristotle: *Poetics*, c. 9.

alive, but ill-responsive to the questionings of our modern souls, it may well be that only a measure of closer and more sympathetic study is required to show us the real kinship which exists—to reveal in these men and women a genuine and noble life—a life flowing from unfailing sources, from some of which, perhaps, we may realize that we have been too far and too long severed.

In editing this book considerable debts have been incurred to the already mentioned works of M. de Wyzewa and Mr Ellis, and to various volumes of the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum*.

My object has been to prepare a volume for popular though not unscholarly reading; I have been at pains to secure the correctness of my text by study of the oldest printed versions of De Voragine and Caxton; but I have not sought to meet the requirements of a literary antiquary. I have therefore slightly modernized the spelling. In the lives selected, which represent about a tenth of Caxton's entire work, I have made omissions—but sparingly, and in such a way as not to injure the essential character and atmosphere of the text. Still more sparingly and slightly have I ventured on alterations. They were prompted by the desire of bringing clearness out of confused or corrupt texts or of setting right mistranslations; they occur chiefly in the lives of S. Austin and S. Louis.

G. V. O'N.

CAXTON'S INTRODUCTION

THE holy and blessed Doctor S. Jerome saith this authority: Do alway some good work, to the end that the devil find thee not idle. And the holy Doctor S. Austin saith in the book of the labour of monks that, no man strong or mighty to labour ought to be idle. For which cause, when I had performed and accomplished divers works and histories translated out of French into English at the request of certain lords, ladies, and gentlemen, as the story of the Recuyel of Troy, the Book of the Chess, the History of Jason, the History of the Mirror of the World, the fifteen books of the Metamorphoses, in which he contained the Fables of Ovid, and the History of Godfrey of Boulogne in the Conquest of Jerusalem, with other divers works and books, I ne nyste what work to begin and put forth after the said works tofore made; and forasmuch as idleness is so much blamed, as saith S. Bernard the mellifluous Doctor, that she is mother of lies and stepdame of virtues, and that it is she that overthroweth strong men into sin, quencheth virtue, nourisheth pride, and maketh the way ready to go to hell: and John Cassiodorus saith that the thought of him that is idle, thinketh on none other thing but on lickerous meats and viands for his belly: and the holy S. Bernard, aforesaid, saith in an epistle: 'When

the time shall come that it shall behove us to render and give account of our idle time, what reason may we render, or what answer shall we give when in idlenesse is none excuse?' and Prosper saith that, whosoever liveth in idleness, liveth in manner of a dumb beast. And because I have seen the authorities that blame and despise so much idleness, and also know well that it is one of the capital and deadly sins, much hateful unto God: therefore I have concluded and firmly purposed in myself no more to be idle, but will apply myself to labour and such occupation as I have been accustomed to do. And forasmuch as S. Austin, aforesaid, saith upon a psalm that good work ought not to be done for fear of pain but for the love of righteousness, and that it be of very and sovereign franchise, and because me seemeth to be a sovereign weal to incite and exhort men and women to keep them from sloth and idleness, and to let to be understood to such people as be not lettered the nativities, the lives, the passions, the miracles, and the death of the holy saints, and also some other notory deeds and acts of times past; I have submised myself to translate into English the legend of saints which is called Legenda Aurea in Latin, that is to say the Golden Legend. For in like wise as gold is most noble above all other metals, in like wise is this Legend holden most noble above all other works. Against me, here might some persons say that this legend hath been translated tofore, and truth it is. But forasmuch as I had by me a legend in French, another in Latin, and the third in English, which varied in many and divers

places, and also many histories were comprised in the other two books which were not in the English books therefore I have written one out of the said three books, which I have ordered otherwise than the said English legend is, which was before made; beseeching all them that shall see or hear it read to pardon me where I have erred or made fault, which, if any be, is of ignorance and against my will, and submit it wholly of such as can and may, to correct it, humbly beseeching them so to do; and in so doing they shall deserve a singular laud and merit, and I shall pray for them unto Almighty God, that he of his benign grace reward them, etc., and that it profit to all them that shall read or hear it read, and may increase in them virtue, and expel vice and sin, that by the example of the holy saints they amend their living here in this short life, that by their merits they and I may come to everlasting life and bliss in heaven. Amen.

And forasmuch as this said work was great and over chargeable to me to accomplish, I feared me in the beginning of the translation to have continued it, because of the long time of the translation, and also in the imprinting of the same, and, in manner half desperate to have accomplished it, was in purpose to have left it after that I had begun to translate it and to have laid it apart, ne had it been at the instance and request of the puissant, noble, and virtuous Earl, my lord William, Earl of Arundel, which desired me to proceed and continue the said work, and promised me to take a reasonable quantity of them when they were achieved and accomplished, and sent

to me a worshipful gentleman, a servant of his, named John Stanney, which solicited me, in my lord's name, that I should in no wise leave it but accomplish it, promising that my said lord should during my life give and grant to me a yearly fee, that is to wit, a buck in summer and a doe in winter, with which fee I hold me well content. Then at contemplation and reverence of my said lord I have endeavoured me to make an end and finish this said translation, and also have imprinted it in the most best wise that I could or might, and present this said book to his good and noble lordship, as chief causer of the achieving of it, praying him to take it in gree of me William Caxton, his poor servant, and that it like him to remember my fee. And I shall pray unto Almighty God for his long life and welfare, and after this short and transitory life to come into everlasting joy in heaven; the which He send to him and me and to all them that shall read and hear this said book, for the love and faith of Whom all these holy saints have suffered death and passion. Amen.

THE HISTORY OF JOB

THERE was a man in the land of Uz named Job, and this man was simple, rightful and dreading God and going from all evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and his possession was seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred asses, and his family and household passing much and great. He was a great man and rich among all the men of the Orient. And his sons went daily each to other house making great feasts, ever each one as his day came, and they sent for their three sisters for to eat and drink with them. When they had thus feasted each other, Job sent to them and blessed and sanctified them, and rising every day early, he offered sacrifices for them all, saying: 'Lest my children sin and bless not God in their hearts.' And thus did Job every day.

On a day when the sons of God were tofore our Lord, Satan came and was among them, to whom our Lord said: 'Whence comest thou?' Which answered: 'I have gone round about the earth and through walked it.' Our Lord said to him: 'Hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like unto him in the earth, a man simple, rightful, dreading God and going from evil?' To whom Satan answered: 'Doth Job dread God idly? If so were that thou overthrewest him, his house and

all his substance round about, he should soon forsake thee. Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his possession is increased much in the earth, but stretch out thy hand a little, and touch all that he hath in possession, and he shall soon grudge and not bless thee.' Then said our Lord to Satan: 'Lo! all that which he owneth and hath in possession, I will it be in thy hand and power, but on his person ne body set not thy hand.' Satan departed and went from the face of our Lord.

On a day as his sons and daughters ate, and drank wine, in the house of the oldest brother, there came a messenger to Job which said: 'The oxen eared in the plough and the ass pastured in the pasture by them, and the men of Sabea ran on them, and smote thy servants, and slew them with sword, and I only escaped for to come and to show it to thee.' And whiles he spake came another and said: 'The fire of God fell down from heaven and hath burnt thy sheep and servants and consumed them, and I only escaped for to come and show it to thee.' And yet whiles he spake came another and said: 'The Chaldees made three hosts and have enveigled thy camels and taken them, and have slain thy servants with sword, and I only escaped for to bring thee word.' And yet he speaking another entered in and said: 'Thy sons and daughters drinking wine in the house of thy first begotten son, suddenly came a vehement wind from the region of desert and smote the four corners of the house, which falling oppressed thy children, and they be all dead, and I only fled for to tell it to thee.' Then Job arose, and cut his coat,

and did do shave his head, and falling down to the ground, worshipped and adored God, saying: 'I am come out naked from the womb of my mother and naked shall return again thereto. Our Lord hath given and our Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased our Lord, so it is done; the name of our Lord be blessed.' In all these things Job sinned not with his lips, ne spake nothing follily against our Lord, but took it all patiently.

After this it was so that on a certain day when the children of God stood tofore our Lord, Satan came and stood among them, and God said to him: 'Whence comest thou?' To whom Satan answered: 'I have gone round the earth, and walked through it.' And God said to Satan, 'Hast thou not considered my servant Job that there is no man like him in the earth, a man simple, rightful, dreading God and going from evil and yet retaining his innocency? Thou hast moved me against him that I should put him to affliction without cause.' To whom Satan said: 'Skin for skin, and all that ever a man hath he shall give for his soul. Neverthless, stretch thine hand and touch his mouth and his flesh, and thou shalt see that he shall not bless thee.' Then said God to Satan: 'I will well that his body be in thine hand, but save his soul and his life.' Then Satan departed from the face of our Lord and smote Job with the worst blotches and blains from the plant of his foot unto the top of his head, which was made like a lazar and was cast out and sat on the dunghill. Then came his wife to him and said: 'Yet thou abidest in thy simpleness; forsake thy God

and bless him no more, and go die.' Then Job said to her: 'Thou hast spoken like a foolish woman; if we have received and taken good things of the hand of our Lord, why shall we not sustain and suffer evil things?' In all these things Job sinned not with his lips. Then three men that were friends of Job, hearing what harm was happed and come to Job, came ever each one from his place to him, that one was named Eliphas the Temanite, another Bildad the Shuhite, and the third, Zophar Naamathite. And when they saw him from far they knew him not, and crying they wept. They came for to comfort him, and when they considered his misery they tare their clothes and cast dust on their heads, and sat by him seven days and seven nights, and no man spake to him a word, seeing his sorrow.

Then after that Job and they talked and spake together of his sorrow and misery; of which S. Gregory hath made a great book called *The Morals of S. Gregory*, which is a noble book and a great work.

But I pass over all the matters, and return unto the end, how God restored Job again to prosperity. It was so that when these three friends of Job had been long with Job, and had said many things each of them to Job, and Job again to them, our Lord was wroth with these three men and said to them: 'Ye have not spoken rightfully, as my servant Job hath spoken. Take ye therefore seven bulls and seven wethers and go to my servant Job and offer ye sacrifice for you. Job my servant shall pray for you. I shall receive his prayer and shall take his

visage.' They went forth and did as our Lord commanded them. And our Lord beheld the visage of Job, and saw his penance when he prayed for his friends. And our Lord added to Job double of all that Job had possessed. All his brethren came to him, and all his sisters, and all they that tofore had known him, and ate with him in his house, and moved their heads upon him, and comforted him upon all the evil that God had sent to him. And each of them gave him a sheep and a gold ring for his ears. Our Lord blessed more Job in his last days than he did in the beginning. And he had thenafter fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, one thousand asses. And he had seven sons and three daughters. And the first daughter's name was Diem, the second Cassiam, and the third Cornustibii; there was nowhere found in the world so fair women as were the daughters of Job; their father Job gave to them heritage among their brethren. And thus Job by his patience gat so much love of God, that he was restored double of all his losses. And Job lived after, one hundred and forty years, and saw his sons and the sons of his sons unto the fourth generation, and died an old man and full of days.

S. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

S. THOMAS, when he was in Cæsarea, our Lord appeared to him, and said: 'The King of Inde, Gundoferus, hath sent his provost, Abbanes, for to seek men that can well the craft of masons, and I shall send thee to him.' And S. Thomas said: 'Sir, send me overall save to them of Inde.' And our Lord said to him: 'Go thy way thither surely, for I shall be thy keeper, and when thou hast converted them of Inde, thou shalt come to me by the crown of martyrdom.' And Thomas said to him: 'Thou art my lord, and I thy servant; thy will be fulfilled.' And as the provost went through the market, our Lord said to him: 'Young man, what wilt thou buy?' and he said: 'My lord hath sent me for to bring to him some that be learned in the science of masonry, that they might make for him a palace after the work of Rome.' And then our Lord delivered to him S. Thomas the Apostle, and told to him that he was much expert in that work. And they departed and sailed till they came in a city, where the king made a wedding of his daughter, and had do cry that all the people should come to this feast of this marriage or else he would be angry. And it so happed that the provost and Thomas went thither, and an Hebrew maid had a pipe in her hand and praised ever each one with some laud or praising. And when she saw

the apostle she knew that he was an Hebrew, because he ate not, but had alway his eyen firm toward heaven. And as the maid sang tofore him in Hebrew, she said: 'The God of heaven is one only God, the which created all things and founded the seas.' And the apostle made her to say these words again. And the butler beheld him, and saw that Thomas ate not ne drank not, but alway looked upward to heaven. And he came to the apostle and smote him on the cheek; and the apostle said to him: 'That in time to come it be pardoned to thee, and that now a wound transitory be given to thee'; and said: 'I shall not arise from this place till the hand that hath smitten me be eaten with dogs.' And anon after, the butler went for to fetch water at a well, and there a lion came and slew him and drank his blood, and the hounds drew his body into pieces, in such wise that a black dog brought the right arm into the hall in the middle of the dinner. And when they saw this, all the company was abashed, and the maid remembered the words, and threw down her pipe or flute, and fell down at the feet of the apostle. And this vengeance blameth S. Austin in his book of Faustius, and saith that this was set in of some false prophets, for this thing might be suspicious unto many things. Whether it be true or no it appertaineth not to me, but I wot well that they should be like as our Lord teacheth, which saith: 'If any man smiteth thee on that one cheek, show and offer to him that other,' and certainly the apostle held within his courage the will of God and of dilection, and without forth he [the butler] required example of correction.

This saith S. Austin. And then, at the request of the king, the apostle blessed them that were new married, and said: 'Lord God, give to these children the blessing of thy right hand, and set in their minds the seed of life.' And when the apostle was gone, there was found, in the hand of the young man that was married, a branch of palm full of dates; and when he and his wife had eaten of the fruit they fell asleep, and they had one semblable dream. For them seemed that a king adorned with precious stones embraced them, and said: 'Mine apostle hath blessed you in such wise that ye shall be partakers of the glory perdurable.' Then they awoke, and told to each other their dream. And then the apostle came to them and said: 'My king hath appeared right now to you, and hath brought me hither, the doors being shut, so that my blessing may be fruitful upon you.'

And he thus saying, two angels appeared to them and said: 'We be the two angels deputed for to keep you, and if ye keep well all the admonestments of the apostle we shall offer to God all your desires.' And then the apostle baptized them, and informed them diligently in the faith. And long time after the wife, named Pelagia, was sacred with a veil, and suffered martyrdom, and the husband named Denis was sacred bishop of that city. And after this, the apostle and Abbanes came unto the King of Inde, and the king devised to the apostle a marvellous palace, and delivered to him great treasure. And the king went into another province, and the apostle gave all the treasure to poor people, and the apostle

was alway in predications two years or thereabout ere the king came, and converted much people without number to the faith. And when the king came and knew what he had done, he put him and Abbanes in the most deepest of his prisons, and purposed fully to slay them and burn. And in the meanwhile Gath, brother of the king, died, and there was made for him a rich sepulchre; and the fourth day he that had been dead arose from death to life, and all men were abashed and fled. And he said to his brother: 'This man that thou intendest to slay and burn is the friend of God, and the angels of God serve him, and they brought me in to paradise, and have showed me a palace of gold and silver and of precious stones, and it is marvellously ordained. And when I marvelled of the great beauty thereof, they said to me: This is the palace that Thomas hath made for thy brother. And when I said that I would be thereof porter, they said to me: Thy brother is made unworthy to have it; if thou wilt dwell therein, we shall pray God to raise thee so that thou mayst go buy it of thy brother, in giving to him the money that he supposed he had lost.' And when he had said this he ran to the prison and required of the apostle that he would pardon his brother that he had done to him, and then delivered him out of prison, and prayed the apostle that he would take and do on him a precious vesture. And the apostle said to him: 'Knowest thou not that they which ween to have power in things celestial set nought in nothing fleshly ne earthly?' And when the apostle issued out of prison, the king came against him and fell

down at his feet, and required of him pardon. Then the apostle said to him: 'God hath given to you much great grace when he hath showed to you his secrets; now believe in Jesu Christ and be ye baptized, to the end that thou be prince in the realm perdurable.' And then the brother of the king said: 'I have seen the palace that thou hast do make to my brother, and I am come for to buy it.' And the apostle said to him: 'If it be the will of thy brother it shall be done.' And the king said: 'Sith it pleaseth God, this shall be mine, and the apostle shall make to thee another; and if peradventure he may not, this same shall be common to thee and to me.' And the apostle answered and said: 'Many palaces be there in heaven which be made ready sith the beginning of the world, that be bought by price of the faith and by alms of your riches, which may well go tofore you to these palaces but they may not follow you.'

And after this, at the end of a month, the apostle made to assemble all them of the province, and when they were assembled he commanded that the feeble and sick should be set apart by themselves. Then he prayed for them, and they that were well enseigned and taught said Amen. And forthwith came a clear light from heaven which descended upon them, and smote down all the people and the apostle to the earth; and they supposed they had been smitten with thunder, and so lay by the space of half an hour. After, the apostle rose and said: 'Arise ye up, for my lord is come as thunder, and hath healed us;' and anon they arose all whole and glorified God

and the apostle. Then began the apostle to teach them, and to show to them the degrees of virtue. The first is that they should believe in God which is one essence and treble or three in persons, and showed to them examples sensible, how three persons be in one essence. The first example in a man is wisdom, and thereof cometh understanding, memory, and cunning. Cunning is of that thou hast learned the memory or mind, and retainest that thou shouldest forget. And the understanding is that thou understandest this that is taught to thee and showed. The second example is that, in a vine be three things, the stock, the leaf, and the fruit. The third example is that three things be in the head of a man, hearing, seeing, and tasting or smelling. The second degree that they receive baptism. The third, that they keep them from fornication. The fourth, that they keep them from avarice. The fifth, that they restrain them from gluttony. The sixth, that they keep their penance. The seventh, that they persevere and abide in these things. The eighth, that they love hospitality. The ninth, that in things to be done they require the will of God, and that they require such things by works. The tenth, that they eschew those things that be not for to be done. The eleventh, that they do charity to their enemies and to their friends. The twelfth, that they keep charity, and do work by diligence to keep these things. And after his predication forty thousand men were baptized, without women and small children.

And incontinent he went into the great Inde where he shone by miracles innumerable, for he enlumined

and made to see Syntice, the friend of Migdone, which was wife of Carisius, cousin of the king of Inde. And Migdonia said to Syntice: 'Weenest thou that I may see him?' Then Migdone changed her habit by the counsel of Syntice, and put herself among the poor women, and came whereas the apostle preached. And he began to preach of the maleurté and unhappiness of this life, and said that this life is unhappy, wretched and subject to aventures, and is so slippery and fleeting that when one weeneth to hold it it fleeth away. And after, he began to show to them by four reasons that they should gladly hear the word of God, and likeneth it to four manner of things: first, unto a colour, which lighteth the eye of our understanding; secondly, to a syrup or a purgation, for the word of God purgeth our affection from all fleshly love; thirdly, unto an emplaister, because it healeth the wounds of our sins; and fourthly, unto meat, because the word of God nourisheth us, and delighteth in heavenly love. And in like manner like as all these things avail not to the sick man but if he take and receive them, in like wise the word of God profiteth nothing to a languishing sick man if he hear it not devoutly. And as the apostle thus preached Migdonia believed in God, and refused the company of her husband. Then Carisius did so much that he made the apostle to be set in prison. And Migdonia went to him and asked him forgiveness, because he was set in prison for her sake. And he comforted her sweetly, and said he would suffer it debonairly. And then Carisius prayed the king that he would send the queen his wife's sister

unto her, for to essay if she might turn her, and call her again from the christen faith. And the queen was sent thither, and when she saw her, and knew of so many miracles as the apostle did, she said: 'They be accursed of God that believe not in his works.' Then the apostle taught them shortly that were there, four things; first, that they should love the church, honour and worship the priests, assemble them often in prayers, and often to hear the word of God. And when the king saw the queen, he said to her: 'Why hast thou abided there so long?' And she then answered: 'I had supposed that Migdonia had been a fool, but she is right wise, for she hath brought me to the apostle, which hath made me to know the way of truth, and they be overmuch fools that believe not the way of truth, that is to say, that they believe in Jesu Christ.' And then the king was abashed, and said to his cousin: 'When I would have recovered thy wife I have lost mine, and my wife is worse to me than thine is to thee.' Then the king commanded that the apostle should be brought tofore him, his hands and feet bound; and was commanded that he should reconcile the wives to their husbands. And then the apostle said to the king, in showing to him by three examples that, as long as he should be in the error of the faith they ought not to obey them. That is to wit, by the example of the king, by example of the tower, and by example of the fountain, and said to him: 'Thou that art king wilt have no services soiled ne foul, but thou hast cleanly servants and neat chamberers. And what weenest thou God loveth? Chastity and

clean services. Am I then to blame if I preach to thee to love God and his servants whom he loveth? I have made them clean servants to him. I have founded a tower; and thou sayst to me that I should destroy it. Also I have dolven in the deep earth, and have brought forth a fountain out of the abysm, and thou sayst I should stop it.' Then the king was angry, and commanded to bring forth pieces of iron burning, and made to set the apostle on them all naked, his feet bound. And anon by the will of our Lord, a fountain of water sourded and sprang up, and quenched it all. And then the king, by the counsel of his cousin, made him to be set in a burning furnace, which was made so cold that the next day he issued out all safe without harm. And then said Carisius to the king: 'Make him to offer sacrifice to one of the gods only, in such wise that he fall in the ire of his God that thus delivereth him.' And as they constrained him thereto, he said: 'King, thou art nothing more noble ne more mighty than be thy painters, and how despisest thou very God and worshippest a painting whom thou weenest to be thy God? Like as Carisius hath said to thee, that my God should be angry when that I worshipped thy god. And if he be angered, it should be more to thy god than to me, for when thou shouldest ween that I worshipped thy God, I should worship mine.' And the king said: 'Why speakest thou to me such words?' And then the apostle commanded in Hebrew the devil that was within the idol that, as soon as he kneeled tofore the idol, he should anon break it in pieces. And the apostle kneeled and

said: 'Lo! see ye that I worship, but not the idol; I adore, but not the metal; I worship, but not the false image, but I honour and worship my Lord Jesu Christ in the name of whom I command thee, devil, which art hid within this image, that thou break this false idol.' And anon he molt it as wax. And then the priests came lowing as beasts, and the bishop of the temple lift up a glaive and run the apostle through and said: 'I shall avenge the injury of my god.' And the king and Carisius fled away, for they saw that the people would avenge the apostle and burn the bishop all alive. And the christian men bare away the body of the apostle and buried it worshipfully. Long time after, about the year of our Lord two hundred and thirty, the body of the apostle was borne into Edessa, the city which sometime was said Rages, city of Media; and Alexander the Emperor bare it thither at the request of the Syrians.

Isidore, in the book of the Life of the Saints, saith thus of this apostle: 'Thomas, apostle and disciple of our Lord Jesu Christ, and like unto our Saviour, preached the Gospel unto miscreants, to them of Persia and of Media, to the Hircanians and Bactrians, and he entering into the parts of the Orient, pierced through the entrails of the people. There demened his predication unto the title of his passion, and there was he pierced with a glaive and so died.' And Chrysostom saith that when Thomas came in to the parts of the three kings which came to worship our Lord he baptized them, and they were made helpers and aiders of our Lord and of christian faith.

S. MARTHA

S. MARTHA, hostess of our Lord Jesu Christ, was born of a royal kindred. Her father was named Syro and her mother Eucharia. The father of her was duke of Syria and places maritime, and Martha with her sister possessed by the heritage of their mother three places, that was, the castle Magdalen and Bethany and a part of Jerusalem. It is nowhere read that Martha had ever any husband ne fellowship of man, but she as a noble hostess ministered and served our Lord, and would also that her sister should serve him and help her, for she thought that all the world was not sufficient to serve such a guest.

After the ascension of our Lord, when the disciples were departed, she with her brother Lazares and her sister Mary, also S. Maximin which baptized them and to whom they were committed of the Holy Ghost, and many others, were put into a ship without sail, oars, or rudder governail, of the paynims, which by the conduct of our Lord they came all to Marseilles, and after came to the territory of Aquense or Aix, and there converted the people to the faith. Martha was right facound of speech, and courteous and gracious to the sight of the people.

There was that time upon the river of Rhone, in a certain wood between Arles and Avignon, a great dragon, half beast and half fish, greater than an ox,

longer than an horse, having teeth sharp as a sword, and horned on either side, head like a lion, tail like a serpent, and defended him with two wings on either side, and could not be beaten with cast of stones ne with other armour, and was as strong as twelve lions or bears; which dragon lay hiding and lurking in the river, and perished them that passed by and drowned ships. He came thither by sea from Galicia, and was engendered of Leviathan, which is a serpent of the water and is much wood, and of a beast called Bonacho, that is engendered in Galicia. To whom Martha, at the prayer of the people, came into the wood, and found him eating a man. And she cast on him holy water, and showed to him the cross; which [dragon] anon was overcome, and standing still as a sheep, she bound him with her own girdle; and then was slain with spears and glaives of the people. The dragon was called of them that dwelled in the country Tarasconus, whereof, in remembrance of him that place is called Tarasconus, which tofore was called Berlue, and the Black Lake, because there be woods shadowous and black. And there the blessed Martha, by licence of Maximin her master and of her sister, dwelled and abode in the same place after, and daily occupied in prayers and in fastings, and thereafter assembled and gathered together a great convent of sisters, and builded a fair church at the honour of the blessed Mary virgin, where she led a hard and a sharp life. She eschewed flesh and all fat meat, eggs, cheese and wine; she ate but once a day. An hundred times a day and an

hundred times a night she kneeled down and bowed her knees.

On a time, at Avignon, when she preached between the town and the river of Rhone, there was a young man on that other side of the river desiring to hear her words, and had no boat to pass over. He began to swim, but he was suddenly taken by the strength of the water, and anon suffocate and drowned, whose body unnethe was found the next day. And when it was taken up, it was presented at the feet of Martha for to be raised to life. She then, in manner of a cross, fell down to the ground and prayed in this manner: 'O Adonay, Lord Jesu Christ which raisedst sometime my well-beloved brother, behold, my most dear guest, to the faith of them that stand here, and raise this child!' And she took him by the hand, and forthwith he arose living and received the holy baptism.

Eusebius telleth in the book of the Historia Ecclesiastica that a woman named Emorissa, after that she was healed of our Lord, she made in her court an image like unto Jesu Christ, with cloth and hem, like as she saw him when she was healed, and worshipped him much devoutly. The herbs that grew under the image tofore that she had touched the hem were of no virtue, but, after that she had touched it, they were of so much virtue that many sick people by them were healed. That woman Emorissa, whom our Lord healed, Ambrose saith that it was Martha. S. Jerome saith, and it is had in Historia Tripartita, that Julianus Apostata took away that image that Emorissa made, and set his

own there, which, with the stroke of thunder, was all tobroken. Our Lord came to her a year tofore her death, and showed to her that she should depart out of this world, and all that year she was sick and laboured in the fevers, and eight days tofore her death she heard the heavenly fellowship of angels bearing her sister's soul into heaven, and anon did do come all the convent of brethren and of sisters, and said to them: 'My friends and most sweet fellows, I pray you to rejoice and enjoy with me, for I see the fellowship of angels bear the soul of my sister Mary unto heaven. O most fair and sweet sister, thou livest now with thy master and my guest in the blessed seat in heaven.' And then anon Martha said to them that were present, that her death was nigh, and bade to light the tapers about her, and that they should wake unto her death. And about midnight tofore the day of her death, they that should watch her were heavy of sleep and slept, and there came a great wind and extinguished and did out the lights. She then, seeing a great tourbe of wicked spirits, began to pray and said: 'My father Eli, my dear guest, these deceivers be gathered for to devour me, bringing written all the evil deeds that ever I did. O blessed Eli, be not withdrawn from me, but intend in to mine help'; and forthwith she saw her sister coming to her, holding a brand in her hand and lighted the tapers and lamps, and as each of them called other by their name, Christ came to them saying: 'Come, my well-beloved hostess, for where I am thou shalt be with me. Thou hast received me in thine harbour and I shall receive thee in mine

heaven, and all them that call upon thee, I shall hear them for thy love.' Then the hour of her death approaching, she commanded that she should be borne out of the house that she might behold and look up into heaven, and to lay her on the earth, and to hold the sign of the cross tofore her; and saying these words, she prayed: 'My sweet guest, I beseech thee to keep me, thy poor creature, and like as thou hast vouchsafed to be lodged with me, so I beseech thee to receive me into thine heavenly harbour.' And then she bade that the Passion after Luke should be read tofore her, and when this was said: 'Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum'; she gave up her spirit and died in our Lord. The next day following, that was the Sunday, whiles they said lauds about her body, and did her obsequies, and about the hour of tierce, at Petrogoricke, our Lord appeared to the blessed Frontonius singing mass, which after the epistle slept in his chair, and said to him: 'My well-beloved Frontone, if thou wilt fulfil that thou behighest long sith to my hostess Martha, arise anon and follow me.' Whose commandment he obeyed, and suddenly both came to Tarascona, and singing the office about the body and the other answering, they with their own hands laid the body into the sepulchre. And troth it was that at Petrogoricke, when they had sung in the choir and the deacon should go read the gospel and receive the benediction, they awoke the bishop, demanding the benediction. Then the bishop awoke and said: 'Why have ye awakened me, my brethren? Our Lord Jesu Christ hath led me to his hostess Martha,

and we have laid her in her sepulchre. Now send thither messengers for to fetch our ring of gold and our gloves, which whiles I made me ready to bury her, I delivered them to the sexton, and I have forgotten them there because ye awoke me so soon.' Then were messengers sent forth, and as the bishop said, they found his ring and one glove which they brought again, and that other the sexton retained for a witness and memory. And the blessed Frontonius added thereto, saying that after her sepulture a brother of the same place, a learned man in the law, demanded of our Lord what was his name? To whom he answered not, but showed a book open in his hand in which was written this versicle: 'In everlasting memory shall be my rightful hostess, and she shall dread none evil in the last day'; and when he should turn the leaves of the book, in every leaf he found the same written. Where afterward many miracles were showed and done at her tomb. Then Clovis, king of France, was after this made a christian man, and baptized of S. Remigius, and suffering great pain in his reins, came to her tomb and there received very health. For which cause he enriched that place; and the space of three miles way about on both sides of the river of Rhone, as well towns as castles, he gave to the same place, and that place he made free. Marcilla, her servant, wrote her life; which afterward went into Sclavonia and there preached the gospel of Christ, and after ten years from the death of Martha she rested in our Lord.

SS. ADRIAN AND NATALIE

ADRIAN suffered death under Maximian, emperor. For when the said Maximian was in the city of Nicodemia, whereas he sacrificed to the idols, and by his commandment they sought all christian men; some sought them for dread, and some for love, and some for promise of silver, so that neighbour brought his neighbour to martyrdom, and cousin his cousin. Among whom three and thirty were taken of them that they sought, and brought tofore the king. And the king said to them: 'Have ye not heard what pain is ordained against the christian men?' And they said to him: 'We have heard the commandment of thy folly.' Then the king was angry and commanded that they should be beaten with raw sinews and their mouths beaten with stones, and that each of their tongues should be pierced with iron, and that they should be bound and closed in prison. And then Adrian, which was first in the office of knighthood, said to them: 'I conjure you by your God that ye tell to me the reward that ye entend to have for these torments.' And the holy man said that never eye saw, nor ear heard, ne heart of man might think, those things that our Lord maketh ready for them that love him perfectly. And Adrian leapt in the middle among them and said: 'Account ye me with them here, for I am a christian man.'

And when the emperor heard that, and that he would do no sacrifice, he did do bind him and threw him in prison. And when Natalie his wife knew that her husband was in prison for the faith of Jesu Christ she was glad, and ran to the prison, and kissed the chains that her husband was bound with, and also of the others, for she was christian secretly, but she durst not publish it for dread of the persecution. And she said to her husband: 'Blessed art thou, my lord Adrian; for thou hast found the riches which thy father and mother never left to thee, which them that possess many things have need of, and shall have thereof great need when they shall have no time to borrow ne to take; when that one shall not deliver that other from pain, ne the father the son, ne the mother the daughter, ne the servant the master, ne one friend another friend, ne riches them that own them.' And when she had admonished him that he should despise all worldly glory and friends and kindred, and that always he should have his heart unto celestial things, Adrian said to her: 'Go now, my sister, the time of our passion hasteth, of which thou shalt see our end.' Then she recommended her husband unto the other saints that they should comfort him, and then she returned unto her house. And after, Adrian hearing when the day of his passion should be, gave gifts to the keepers of the prison, and delivered to them the other saints in pledge, and went to his house for to call Natalie, like as he had promised by oath that she should be present at their passion. And a man that saw him come, ran tofore him, and said to Natalie: 'Adrian

is delivered, see, lo! where he cometh.' And when she heard it she believed it not, and said: 'And who may deliver him from his bonds? God forbid that he be loosed of his bonds, and departed from the saints.' And as she said these words, a child of the meiny came, that said: 'Certes, my lord is let go.' And she supposed that he had fled from his martyrdom, and wept bitterly, and when she saw him she shut hastily the door against him. 'Let him be far from me,' said she, 'that is fallen away from God, and God forbid that I speak to the mouth of him that denied his Lord.' And then she turned to him and said: 'O thou wretch without God, who constrained thee to emprise and take which thou mayst not perform? Who hath taken thee from the saints, or who hath deceived thee for to depart from them? Say to me, wherefore art thou fled tofore thou sawest the battles? How art thou hurt? Certain it is of none arrow that was shot to thee. What shall I do that am joined to him that is of the lineage of felons? It is not granted to me to be the wife of a martyr but for a time; but now I shall be called the wife of a renegade and transgressor; my joy certainly hath little endured, and it shall be to me a reproach long time.' And in hearing this thing the blessed Adrian enjoyed him strongly; and marvelled much of his wife that was so young and right fair, noble, and married but fourteen months without more, how she might say this; and therefore he was the more ardent to martyrdom, and heard gladly these words. But when he saw her overmuch tormented, he said to her: 'Open the door to me, Natalie, my love and

lady; for I have not fled the martyrdom as thou weenest, but I am come to call thee, as I promised to thee.' And she believed it not, but said to him: 'See how this traitor renegade deceiveth me! Why liest thou, that other Judas? Flee, thou unhappy, from me or I shall slay myself, and then thou shalt be full sorry.' And while she tarried to open the door, he said: 'Open anon, for I must go, and then thou shalt see me no more, and then shalt thou weep that thou hast not seen me tofore my death. I have laid to pledge for me the holy martyrs, and if the ministers seek me and they find me not, they shall cause the saints to suffer their martyrdom and mine also.' And when she heard that, she opened the door, and they then embraced and kissed each other. And went together to the prison, and there Natalie cleansed, seven days during, the wounds of the saints with precious cloths. And then the emperor commanded them to be brought to him, and they were so broken with the pains that they might not go, but were borne as beasts. And Adrian certainly was bound, his hands behind him, and spake to Natalie, and was borne upon the torment of eculee and presented to Cæsar. And Natalie joined her to him, and said to him: 'My lord, beware that thou tremble not for none adventure when thou shalt see the torments; thou shalt not suffer here but a little, but thou shalt be anon enhanced with the angels.' And then Adrian would not sacrifice, and was beaten right grievously. And then Natalie ran to the saints that were in the prison, and said: 'My lord hath begun his martyrdom.' And the king warned

him that he should not blame his gods; and he answered: 'If I be thus tormented that blame them that be no gods, how shalt thou be tormented that blasphemest him that is very God!' And the king said to him: 'These other traitors have taught thee these words.' To whom Adrian said: 'Why callest thou them traitors, which be doctors and enseign the life perdurable?' And Natalie ran to the others with great joy, and told the words that her husband had said. And then the king did him to be beaten with four strong men. And Natalie anon reported to the other martyrs that were in the prison all the martyrdom, the answers, and the pains of her husband, and he was so sore beaten that his entrails sprang out, and then he was bound with iron, and put in prison with the other. And Adrian was a young man, lusty and much fair, of eight-and-twenty years of age. And when Natalie saw her husband lie grovelling upon the earth, and all to-broken, she laid her hand on his head in comforting him, and said: 'Thou art blessed, my lord, for thou art made worthy to be of the number of saints; thou art blessed, my light, when thou sufferest for him that suffered death for thee: go then forth, my sweet love, that thou mayest see his glory.' And when the emperor heard that many women ministered to the saints in prison, he commanded that they should no more be suffered to enter. And when Natalie heard that, she shaved her head and took the habit of man, and served the saints in the prison and made the other women do so by the ensample of her. And she prayed her husband when he should be in glory that he would

pray for her, that she might keep her undefiled in this world, or rather to be taken out thereof. And when the king heard what the women had done, he commanded to bring forth an anvil or a stithie, so that the holy martyrs should have their legs and arms all to-frusshed and broken thereon, and die the sooner. And then Natalie doubted that her husband should be afeard for the torments of the others, and prayed the ministers that they would begin with him. Then they hewed off his legs and thighs, and Natalie prayed them that they would smite off his hands, and that he should be like to the other saints that had suffered more than he, and when they had hewn them off he gave up his spirit to God. The other saints held forth their feet with their free will, and passed to our Lord. And the king commanded that the bodies should be burnt. And Natalie hid in her bosom the hand of S. Adrian. And when the bodies of the saints were thrown into the fire, Natalie would have with them sprung into the fire and be burnt, and suddenly anon there came a great rain and quenched the fire, so that the bodies of the saints had none harm. And the christian men took counsel together, and did do bear the bodies to Constantinople till that the peace was given to the church, that they were fetched again with honour. And they suffered death about the year of our Lord two hundred and four score.

Natalie then abode and dwelled in her house, and retained the hand of S. Adrian, and for to have comfort thereof she kept it always at her bed's head. And after the judge saw Natalie so fair, so rich, and

so noble, by leave of the emperor he sent women to her because she should consent to him by marriage. To whom Natalie answered: 'Who is he that may do me so much honour that I may be joined to him by marriage? but I require you that I may have term of three days to array and make me ready.' And this she said to the end that she might flee away. Then began she to pray our Lord that he would keep her from touching of man. And then suddenly she fell asleep, and one of the martyrs appeared to her and comforted her sweetly, and commanded her that she should go to the place where the holy bodies were. And when she awoke she took the hand of Adrian only with her, and entered into a ship with many christian men, and when the judge heard it he followed after with many knights, and then the wind came contrary to them, and drowned many, and constrained the others to return. And then in the night the devil appeared to them in guise of a mariner in a ship of phantasm, and said to them: 'From whence come ye, and whither go ye?' And the christian men said: 'We come from Nicomedia and go unto Constantinople.' And he said: 'Ye err; go towards the left side and ye shall sail more right.' And he said so because he would have drowned them in the sea. And as they followed the stars, anon suddenly Adrian appeared to them in a boat, and bade them sail as they did before, and told to them that it was a wicked spirit that had spoken to them, and then he went tofore them and showed them the way; and when Natalie saw him go tofore them she was replenished with joy, so that tofore

day they came to Constantinople. And when Natalie entered into the house where the martyrs were, she put the hand of Adrian to the body. And when she had made her prayers she slept. And S. Adrian appeared to her and saluted her, and commanded her that she should come with him to joy perdurable. And when she awoke she told to them that were there her vision, and took her leave, and after gave up her spirit to Almighty God. And then the good christian men took her body and laid it with the bodies of the martyrs.

S. CHRISTOPHER

CHRISTOPHER was of the lineage of the Canaanites, and he was of a right great stature, and had a terrible and fearful cheer and countenance, and he was twelve cubits of length. And as it is read in some histories that, when he served and dwelled with the king of Canaan, it came in his mind that he would seek the greatest prince that was in the world, and him would he serve and obey. And so far he went that he came to a right great king, of whom the renomee generally was that he was the greatest of the world. And when the king saw him, he received him into his service, and made him to dwell in his court. Upon a time a minstrel sang tofore him a song in which he named oft the devil; and the king, which was a christian man, when he heard him name the devil, made anon the sign of the cross in his visage. And when Christopher saw that, he had great marvel what sign it was, and wherefore the king made it, and he demanded of him. And because the king would not say, he said: 'If thou tell me not, I shall no longer dwell with thee'; and then the king told to him, saying: 'Alway when I hear the devil named, I fear that he should have power over me, and I garnish me with this sign that he grieve ne annoy me.' Then Christopher said to him: 'Doubtest thou the devil that he hurt thee not?

Then is the devil more mighty and greater than thou art. I am then deceived of my hope and purpose for I had supposed I had founden the most mighty and the most greatest lord of the world; but I commend thee to God, for I will go seek him for to be my lord, and I his servant.' And then departed from this king, and hasted him for to seek the devil. And as he went by a great desert, he saw a great company of knights, of which a knight cruel and horrible came to him and demanded whither he went; and Christopher answered to him and said: 'I go seek the devil for to be my master.' And he said: 'I am he that thou seekest.' And then Christopher was glad, and bound him to be his servant perpetual, and took him for his master and lord. And as they went together by a common way, they found there a cross, erect and standing. And anon as the devil saw the cross he was afeard and fled, and left the right way, and brought Christopher about by a sharp desert. And after, when they were past the cross, he brought him to the highway that they had left. And when Christopher saw that, he marvelled, and demanded whereof he doubted, and had left the high and fair way, and had gone so far about by so aspre a desert. And the devil would not tell him in no wise. Then Christopher said to him: 'If thou wilt not tell me, I shall anon depart from thee, and shall serve thee no more.' Wherefor the devil was constrained to tell him, and said: 'There was a man called Christ which was hanged on the cross, and when I see his sign I am sore afraid, and flee from it wheresoever I see it.' To whom Christopher said:

'Then he is greater and more mightier than thou, when thou art afraid of his sign; and I see well that I have laboured in vain, when I have not founden the greatest lord of the world. And I will serve thee no longer; go thy way then, for I will go seek Christ.' And when he had long sought and demanded where he should find Christ, at last he came into a great desert, to an hermit that dwelt there; and this hermit preached to him of Jesu Christ and informed him in the faith diligently, and said to him: 'This king whom thou desirest to serve, requireth the service that thou must oft fast.' And Christopher said to him: 'Require of me some other thing, and I shall do it, for that which thou requirest I may not do.' And the hermit said: 'Thou must then wake and make many prayers.' And Christopher said to him: 'I wot not what it is; I may do no such thing.' And then the hermit said to him: 'Knowest thou such a river, in which many be perished and lost?' To whom Christopher said: 'I know it well.' Then said the hermit: 'Because thou art noble and high of stature and strong in thy members, thou shalt be resident by that river, and thou shalt bear over all them that shall pass there; which shall be a thing right convenable to our Lord Jesu Christ whom thou desirest to serve, and I hope he shall show himself to thee.' Then said Christopher: 'Certes, this service may I well do, and I promise to him for to do it.' Then went Christopher to this river, and made there his habitacle for him, and bare a great pole in his hand instead of a staff, by which he sustained him in the water, and bare over all manner of people with-

out ceasing. And there he abode, thus doing, many days. And in a time, as he slept in his lodge, he heard the voice of a child which called him and said: 'Christopher, come out and bear me over.' Then he awoke and went out, but he found no man. And when he was again in his house, he heard the same voice and he ran out and found no man. The third time he was called and came thither, and found a child beside the rivage of the river, which prayed him goodly to bear him over the water. And then Christopher lift up the child on his shoulders, and took his staff, and entered into the river for to pass. And the water of the river arose and swelled more and more: and the child was heavy as lead, and alway as he went farther the water increased and grew more, and the child more and more waxed heavy, insomuch that Christopher had great anguish and was afeard to be drowned. And when he was escaped with great pain, and passed the water, and set the child aground, he said to the child: 'Child, thou hast put me in great peril; thou weighest almost as I had all the world upon me; I might bear no greater burden.' And the child answered: 'Christopher, marvel thee nothing, for thou hast not only borne all the world upon thee, but thou hast borne him that created and made all the world, upon thy shoulders. I am Jesu Christ the king, to whom thou servest in this work. And because that thou know that I say to thee truth, set thy staff in the earth by thy house, and thou shalt see to-morn that it shall bear floures and fruit.' And anon he vanished from his eyen: and then Christopher set his staff in

the earth, and when he arose on the morn, he found his staff like a palmier bearing flowers, leaves and dates.

And then Christopher went into the city of Lycia, and understood not their language. Then he prayed our Lord that he might understand them; and so he did. And as he was in this prayer, the judges supposed that he had been a fool, and left him there. And then when Christopher understood the language, he covered his visage and went to the place where they martyred christian men, and comforted them in our Lord. And then the judges smote him in the face, and Christopher said to them: 'If I were not christian I should avenge mine injury.' And then Christopher pitched his rod in the earth, and prayed to our Lord that for to convert the people it might bear flowers and fruit, and anon it did so. And then he converted eight thousand men. And then the king sent two knights for to fetch him to the king, and they found him praying, and durst not tell to him so. And anon after, the king sent as many more, and they anon set them down for to pray with him. And when Christopher arose, he said to them: 'What seek ye?' And when they saw him in the visage they said to him: 'The king hath sent us, that we should lead thee bound unto him.' And Christopher said to them: 'If I would, ye should not lead me to him, bound ne unbound.' And they said to him: 'If thou wilt go thy way, go quit, where thou wilt. And we shall say to the king that we have not found thee.' 'It shall not be so,' said he, 'but I shall go with you.' And then he converted

them in the faith, and commanded them that they should bind his hands behind his back, and lead him so bound to the king. And when the king saw him he was afeard and fell down off the seat, and his servants lifted him up and relieved him again. And then the king inquired his name and his country; and Christopher said to him: 'Tofore or I was baptized I was named Reprobus, and after I am Christopher; tofore baptism a Canaanee, now a christian man.' To whom the king said: 'Thou hast a foolish name, that is to wit of Christ crucified, which could not help himself, ne may not profit to thee. Now therefore, thou cursed Canaanee, why wilt thou not do sacrifice to our gods?' To whom Christopher said: 'Thou art rightfully called Dagarus, for thou art the death of the world, and fellow of the devil, and thy gods be made with the hands of men.' And the king said to him: 'Thou wert nourished among wild beasts, and therefore thou mayst not say but wild language, and words unknown to men. And if thou wilt now do sacrifice to the gods I shall give to thee great gifts and great honours, and if not, I shall destroy thee and consume by great pains and torments.' But, for all this, he would in no wise do sacrifice, wherefore he was sent in to prison, and the king did do behead the other knights that he had sent for him, whom he had converted. And after this he sent in to prison to S. Christopher two fair women, of whom that one was named Bisena and that other Aquilina, and promised to them many great gifts if they could draw Christopher to sin with them. And when

Christopher saw that, he set him down in prayer, and when he was constrained by them that embraced him to move, he arose and said: 'What seek ye? For what cause be ye come hither?' And they, which were afraid of his cheer and clearness of his visage, said: 'Holy saint of God, have pity of us so that we may believe in that God that thou preachest.' And when the king heard that, he commanded that they should be let out and brought tofore him, to whom he said: 'Ye be deceived, but I swear to you by my gods that, if ye do no sacrifice to my gods, ye shall anon perish by evil death.' And they said to him: 'If thou wilt that we shall do sacrifice, command that the places may be made clean, and that all the people may assemble at the temple.' And when this was done they entered in to the temple, and took their girdles, and put them about the necks of their gods, and drew them to the earth, and brake them all in pieces, and said to them that were there: 'Go and call physicians and leeches for to heal your gods.' And then, by the commandment of the king, Aquilina was hanged, and a right great and heavy stone was hanged at her feet, so that her members were much despitously broken. And when she was dead, and passed to our Lord, her sister Nicæa was cast into a great fire, but she issued out without harm all whole, and then he made to smite off her head; and so suffered death.

After this Christopher was brought tofore the king, and the king commanded that he should be beaten with rods of iron, and that there should be set upon his head a cross of iron red hot and

burning, and then after, he did do make a siege or a stool of iron, and made Christopher to be bounden thereon, and after, to set fire under it, and cast therein pitch. But the siege or settle malte like wax, and Christopher issued out without any harm or hurt. And when the king saw that, he commanded that he should be bound to a strong stake, and that he should be through-shotten with arrows with forty knights archers. But none of the knights might attain him, for the arrows hung in the air about, nigh him, without touching. Then the king weened that he had been through-shotten with the arrows of the knights, and addressed him for to go to him. And one of the arrows returned suddenly from the air and smote him in the eye, and blinded him. To whom Christopher said: 'Tyrant, I shall die to-morn; make a little clay, with my blood tempered, and anoint therewith thine eye, and thou shalt receive health.' Then by the commandment of the king he was led for to be beheaded, and then there made he his orison, and his head was smitten off; and so suffered martyrdom. And the king then took a little of his blood and laid it on his eye, and said: 'In the name of God and of S. Christopher'; and was anon healed. Then the king believed in God, and gave commandment that if any person blamed God or S. Christopher, he should anon be slain with the sword.

S. DOROTHY

THE glorious virgin and martyr S. Dorothy was born of the noble lineage of the senators of Rome; her father hight Theodore. In that time the persecution of the christen people was great about Rome, wherefore this holy virgin S. Dorothy, despising the worshipping of idols, counselled her father, her mother, and her two sisters, Christine and Celestine, to forsake their possessions; and so they did, and fled into the realm of Cappadocia, and came into the city of Cæsarea, wherein they set S. Dorothy to school, and soon after she was christened of the holy bishop S. Apollinarius, and he named her Dorothy; and she was fulfilled with the Holy Ghost, and in great beauty above all the maidens of that royame. And she despised all worldly vanities, and burned in the love of Almighty God, and loved poverty, and was full of meekness and chastity; whereof the fiend having envy at her blessed living provoked and set afire in her love the provost, so that he would have her to his wife, and anon sent for her in all haste, and when she came he desired to have her to his wife, and promised to her riches of worldly goods without number. And when this holy virgin understood his desire and request she refused it and denied it utterly, and all his riches setting at nought; and moreover she acknowledged herself to be christen,

and that she had vowed her virginity unto Jesu Christ, whom she had chosen to her spouse and would never have other. And when the provost Fabricus heard this he was nigh from himself for anger; and commanded that she should be put in a tun of burning oil, wherein she was preserved by the power of her spouse Jesu Christ that she felt none disease ne harm, but a precious ointment of balm. And when the paynims saw this great miracle many of them were thereby converted to the faith of Jesu Christ. And the tyrant said that she did all this by enchantment, and did do put her in a deep prison nine days long without meat or drink, but she was that while fed by angels' food of our Lord, so that at the end of nine days she was nothing appaired. Then the judge sent for her, supposing that she had been nigh dead and feeble, but when she came she was fairer and brighter to look on than ever she was before, whereof all the people marvelled greatly. Then the judge said to her: 'But if thou wilt worship and do sacrifice to the idols thou shalt not escape the torment of the gibbet.' Then she answered to the judge: 'I worship Almighty God that made all things, and despise thy gods that be fiends.' And then she fell down platte to the earth and lifted up her eyes to Almighty God, beseeching him that he would show his power tofore the people that he was only Almighty God and none other.

Then Fabricius the judge let set up a pillar on high, and thereon he set his god, an idol; and anon there came a multitude of angels from heaven and cast down this idol, and all to-brake it, and anon the

people heard a great noise of fiends crying in the air, saying: 'O Dorothy, why dost thou destroy us and tormentest us so sore?' And for this great miracle many thousands of paynims were turned to the faith of Jesu Christ and were baptized, and after received the crown of martyrdom for the acknowledging of the name of Jesu Christ.

Then the judge commanded that this holy virgin should be hanged on the gibbet, her feet upward and the head downward, and then her body was all torent with hooks of iron, and beaten with rods and scourges, and burnt her breasts with hot fiery brands, and as half dead she was set again into prison, and after, when she was brought again, she was all whole and strong, without any disease or hurt. Whereof the judge had great marvel, and said to her: 'O fair maid, forsake thy God and believé on our gods, for thou mayst see how merciful they be unto thee, and preserve thee. Therefore have pity on thy tender body, for thou hast been tormented enough.' And then the provost sent for her two sisters which were named Christine and Celestine, which for fear of death forsook the faith of Jesu Christ, and went to S. Dorothy and counselled her to obey to the provost's desire and forsake her faith. But this holy virgin rebuked her sisters, and after informed them by so fair and sweet language, that she withdrew them from their blind errors and established them in the faith of Jesu Christ; in such wise that when they were come to the judge they said they were christian and believed on Jesu Christ. And when Fabricius heard that, he was mad for anger, and commanded

that the tormentor should bind their hands, and bind them both together back to back, and cast them in the fire so bound, and burnt them. And then he said to the virgin Dorothy: 'How long wilt thou trouble us with thy witchcraft? Or do sacrifice to our gods, or else anon thy head shall be smitten off.' And then said the holy virgin with a glad semblant: 'Do to me what torment thou wilt, for I am all ready to suffer it for the love of my spouse Jesu Christ, in whose garden full of delices I have gathered roses, spices, and apples.' And when the tyrant heard that he trembled for anger, and commanded that her fair visage should be beaten with stones so that there should appear no beauty in her visage, but all disfigured, and so to be put in prison till the next day. And on the next day she came forth all so whole and sound as though she had suffered no disease, and was more fairer for to look on than ever she was tofore, by the grace of her blessed spouse Jesu Christ, for whose love she took on her these great and sharp torments. And then this cursed judge commanded to smite off her head; and as she was led to the place assigned where it should be done, a scribe of the royame, named Theophilus, said to her in scorn: 'I pray thee to send me some of thy roses and apples that thou hast gathered in the garden of thy spouse that thou praisest so much'; and she granted to him his desire. And this was in the cold winter time when there was both frost and snow. And when she came to the place where she should be beheaded, she kneeled down on her knees and made her prayers to our Lord Jesu Christ, beseeching him that all they

that worship her passion that they might be kept steadfast in the faith, and to take their tribulation patiently, and specially to be delivered from all shame, great poverty, and false slander, and at their last end to have very contrition, confession, and remission of all their sins. And also women with child that call to her for help to have good deliverance, the children to be christened and the mothers to be purified. Also she prayed to God that where her life was written or read in any house, that it should be kept from all peril of lightning and thunder, and from all perils of fire, from perils of thieves, and from sudden death; and to receive the sacraments of holy church at their last end for their most sovereign defence against their ghostly enemy the fiend.

And when she had ended her prayer there was a voice heard from heaven that said: 'Come to me, my dear spouse and true virgin, for all thy love is granted to thee that hast prayed for, and also whom thou prayest for shall be saved; and when thou hast received the crown of martyrdom thou shalt come to the bliss of heaven without end, for thy labour.' And this holy virgin bowed down her head, and the cruel tyrant smote it off.

But a little before this appeared before her a fair child barefoot, clothed in purple, with crisp hairs, whose garment was set full of bright stars, bearing in his hand a little basket shining as gold, with roses and apples, to whom the virgin said: 'I pray thee, bear this basket to Theophilus the scribe.' And thus she suffered death and passed to our Lord full

of virtues, the sixth day of February, the year of our Lord two hundred and eighty-eight, by Fabricius, provost under Diocletian and Maximian emperors of Rome. And as this said Theophilus stood in the palace of the emperor, this child came to him and presented to him the basket, saying: 'These be the roses and apples that my sister Dorothy hath sent to thee from Paradise, the garden of her spouse,' and then this child vanished away. Then he, considering the marvellous work of God in this holy virgin, said anon with a stern voice, praising the God of Dorothy for that great miracle which was showed to him of roses and apples that time, that 'he that sent to me these things is of great power, and therefore his name be blessed world without end, Amen.' And then he was converted to the faith of Jesu Christ, and the most part of the people of the city. And when Fabricius knew this, anon, with great malice, he tormented Theophilus the scribe with many divers torments, and at the last hewed him into small pieces, and the pieces were cast to birds and beasts to be devoured. But he was first baptized and received the holy sacrament, and followed the holy virgin Dorothy into the bliss of heaven.

S. NICHOLAS THE BISHOP

NICHOLAS, citizen of the city of Patras, was born of rich and holy kin, and his father was Epiphanes and his mother Johane. In his young age he eschewed the plays and japes of other young children. He used and haunted gladly holy church; and all that he might understand of holy scripture he executed it in deed and work after his power. And when his father and mother were departed out of this life, he began to think how he might distribute his riches, and not to the praising of the world but to the honour and glory of God. And it was so that one, his neighbour, had then three daughters, virgins, and he was a nobleman: but for the poverty of them together, they were constrained and in very purpose to abandon them to sin. And when the holy man Nicholas knew hereof he had great horror of this, and threw by night secretly into the house of the man a mass of gold wrapped in a cloth. And when the man arose in the morning, he found this mass of gold, and rendered to God therefor great thankings, and therewith he married his oldest daughter. And a little while after this holy servant of God threw in another mass of gold; which the man found, and thanked God, and purposed to wake for to know him that so had aided him in his poverty. And after a few days Nicholas doubled the mass of gold,

and cast it into the house of this man. He awoke by the sound of the gold, and followed Nicholas, which fled from him, and he said to him: 'Sir, flee not away so but that I may see and know thee.' Then he ran after him more hastily, and knew that it was Nicholas; and anon he kneeled down, and would have kissed his feet, but the holy man would not, but required him not to tell nor discover this thing as long as he lived.

After this the bishop of Mirea died and other bishops assembled for to purvey to this church a bishop. And there was, among the others, a bishop of great authority, and all the election was in him. And when he had warned all for to be in fastings and in prayers, this bishop heard that night a voice which said to him that, at the hour of matins, he should take heed to the doors of the church, and him that should come first to the church and have the name of Nicholas they should sacre him bishop. And he showed this to the other bishops and admonished them for to be all in prayers; and he kept the doors. And this was a marvellous thing, for at the hour of matins, like as he had been sent from God, Nicholas arose tofore all other. And the bishop took him when he was come and demanded of him his name. And he, which was simple as a dove, inclined his head, and said: 'I have to name Nicholas.' Then the bishop said to him: 'Nicholas, servant and friend of God, for your holiness ye shall be bishop of this place.' And sith they brought him to the church, howbeit that he refused it strongly, yet they set him in the chair. And he followed, as

he did tofore in all things, in humility and honesty of manners. He woke in prayer and made his body lean, he eschewed company of women, he was humble in receiving all things, profitable in speaking, joyous in admonishing, and cruel in correcting.

It is read in a chronicle that the blessed Nicholas was at the Council of Nice; and on a day, as a ship with mariners were in perishing on the sea, they prayed and required devoutly Nicholas, servant of God, saying: 'If those things that we have heard of thee said be true, prove them now.' And anon a man appeared in his likeness, and said: 'Lo! see ye me not? ye called me'; and then he began to help them in their exploit of the sea, and anon the tempest ceased. And when they were come to his church, they knew him without any man to show him to them, and yet they had never seen him. And then they thanked God and him of their deliverance. And he bade them to attribute it to the mercy of God and to their belief, and nothing to his merits.

It was so on a time that all the province of S. Nicolas suffered great famine, in such wise that vitaille failed. And then this holy man heard say that certain ships laden with wheat were arrived in the haven. And anon he went thither and prayed the mariners that they would succour the perished at least with an hundred muyes of wheat of every ship. And they said: 'Father we dare not, for it is meted and measured, and we must give reckoning thereof in the garners of the Emperor in Alexandria.' And the holy man said to them:

'Do this that I have said to you, and I promise, in the truth of God, that it shall not be lessed or minished when ye shall come to the garners.' And when they had delivered so much out of every ship, they came into Alexandria and delivered the measure that they had received. And then they recounted the miracle to the ministers of the Emperor, and worshipped and praised strongly God and his servant Nicholas. Then this holy man distributed the wheat to every man after that he had need, in such wise that it sufficed for two years, not only for to sell but also to sow.

And in this country the people served idols and worshipped the false image of the cursed Diana. And to the time of this holy man many of them had some customs of the paynims, for to sacrifice to Diana under a sacred tree; but this good man made them of all the country to cease then these customs, and commanded to cut off the tree. Then the devil was angry and wroth against him, and made an oil that burned, against nature, in water and burned stones also. And then he transformed him in the guise of a religious woman and put him in a little boat, and encountered pilgrims that sailed in the sea towards this holy saint, and areasoned them thus and said: 'I would fain go to this holy man, but I may not; wherefore I pray you to bear this oil into his church, and for the remembrance of me that ye anoint the walls of the hall'; and anon he vanished away. Then they saw anon after another ship with honest persons, among whom there was one like to S. Nicholas, which spake to them softly: 'What

hath this woman said to you, and what hath she brought?' And they told to him all by order. And he said to them: 'This is the evil and foul Diana; and, to the end that ye know that I say truth, cast that oil into the sea.' And when they had cast it, a great fire caught it in the sea, and they saw it long burn against nature. Then they came to this holy man and said to him: 'Verily thou art he that appeared to us in the sea and deliveredst us from the sea and awaits of the devil.'

And in this time certain men rebelled against the emperor; and the emperor sent against them three princes, Nepotian, Ursyn and Apollyn. And they came into the port Andrien for the wind, which was contrary to them; and the blessed Nicholas commanded them to dine with him, for he would keep his people from the ravin that they made. And whilst they were at dinner, the consul, corrupt by money, had commanded three innocent knights to be beheaded. And when the blessed Nicholas knew this, he prayed these three princes that they would much hastily go with him. And when they were come where they should be beheaded, he found them on their knees, and blindfold, and the righter brandished his sword over their heads. Then S. Nicholas, embraced with the love of God, set him hardily against the righter, and took the sword out of his hand, and threw it from him, and unbound the innocents, and led them with him all safe. And anon he went to the judgment to the consul, and found the gates closed, which anon he opened by force. And the consul came anon and saluted him:

and this holy man having this salutation in despite, said to him: 'Thou enemy of God, corrupter of the law, wherefore hast thou consented to so great evil and felony? How darest thou look on us?' And when he had sore chidden and reproved him, he repented, and at the prayer of the three princes he received him to penance. After, when the messengers of the emperor had received his benediction, they made their gear ready and departed, and subdued their enemies to the empire without shedding of blood, and sith returned to the emperor and were worshipfully received. And after this it happed that some other in the emperor's house had envy on the weal of these three princes, and accused them to the emperor of high treason, and did so much by prayer and by gifts that they caused the emperor to be so full of ire that he commanded them to prison, and without other demand, he commanded that they should be slain that same night. And when they knew it by their keeper, they rent their clothes and wept bitterly; and then Nepotian remembered him how S. Nicholas had delivered the three innocents, and admonested the others that they should require his aid and help. And thus as they prayed S. Nicholas appeared to them, and after appeared to Constantine the emperor, and said to him: 'Wherefore hast thou taken these three princes with so great wrong, and hast judged them to death without trespass? Arise up hastily, and command that they be not executed, or I shall pray to God that he move battle against thee, in which thou shalt be overthrown and shalt be

made meat to beasts.' And the emperor demanded: 'What art thou that art entered by night into my palace and durst say to me such words?' And he said to him: 'I am Nicholas bishop of Mirea.' And in like wise he appeared to the provost, and feared him, saying with a fearful voice: 'Thou that hast lost mind and wit, wherefore hast thou consented to the death of innocents? Go forth anon and do thy part to deliver them, or else thy body shall rot and be eaten with worms, and thy meiny shall be destroyed.' And he asked him: 'Who art thou that so menacest me?' And he answered: 'Know thou that I am Nicholas, the bishop of the city of Mirea.' Then that one awoke that other, and each told to other their dreams, and anon sent for them that were in prison, to whom the emperor said: 'What art magic or sorcery can ye, that ye have this night by illusion caused us to have such dreams?' And they said that they were none enchanters ne knew no witchcraft, and also that they had not deserved the sentence of death. Then the emperor said to them: 'Know ye well a man named Nicholas?' And when they heard speak of the name of the holy saint, they held up their hands towards heaven, and prayed our Lord that by the merits of S. Nicholas they might be delivered of this present peril. And when the emperor had heard of them the life and miracles of S. Nicholas, he said to them: 'Go ye forth, and yield ye thankings to God, which hath delivered you by the prayer of this holy man, and worship ye him; and bear ye to him of your jewels, and pray ye him that he threaten me no more, but

that he pray for me and for my royame unto our Lord.' And a while after, the said princes went unto the holy man, and fell down on their knees humbly at his feet, saying: 'Verily thou art the sergeant of God, and the very worshipper and lover of Jesu Christ.' And when they had all told this said thing by order, he lift up his hands to heaven and gave thankings and praisings to God, and sent again the princes, well informed, into their countries.

And when it pleased our Lord to have him depart out this world, he prayed our Lord that he would send him his angels; and inclining his head he saw the angels come to him, whereby he knew well that he should depart, and began this holy psalm: 'In te domine speravi,' unto 'in manus tuas,' and so saying: 'Lord, into thine hands I commend my spirit,' he rendered up his soul and died, the year of our Lord three hundred and forty-three, with great melody sung of the celestial company. And when he was buried in a tomb of marble, a fountain of oil sprang out from the head unto his feet; and unto this day holy oil issueth out of his body, which is much available to the health of sicknesses of many men. And after him in his see succeeded a man of good and holy life, which by envy was put out of his bishopric. And when he was out of his see the oil ceased to run, and when he was restored again thereto the oil ran again.

Long after this the Turks destroyed the city of Mirea, and then came thither forty-seven knights of Bari, and four monks showed to them the sepulchre of S. Nicholas. And they opened it and

found the bones swimming in the oil, and they bare them away honourably into the city of Bari, in the year of our Lord ten hundred and eighty-seven.

There was a Jew that saw the virtuous miracles of S. Nicholas, and did do make an image of the saint, and set it in his house, and commanded him that he should keep well his house when he went out, and that he should keep well all his goods, saying to him: 'Nicholas, lo! here be all my goods, I charge thee to keep them, and if thou keep them not well, I shall avenge me on thee in beating and tormenting thee.' And on a time, when the Jew was out, thieves came and robbed all his goods, and left unborne away only the image. And when the Jew came home he found him robbed of all his goods. He areasoned the image, saying these words: 'Sir Nicholas, I had set you in my house for to keep my goods from thieves, wherefore have ye not kept them? Ye shall receive sorrow and torments, and shall have pain for the thieves. I shall avenge my loss and refrain my woodness in beating thee.' And then took the Jew the image, and beat it, and tormented it cruelly. Then happed a great marvel, for when the thieves departed the goods, the holy saint, like as he had been in his array, appeared to the thieves, and said to them: 'Wherefore have I been beaten so cruelly for you and have so many torments? See how my body is hewed and broken; see how that the red blood runneth down by my body; go ye fast and restore it again, or else the ire of God Almighty shall make you as to be one out of his wit, and that all men shall know your felony, and

that each of you shall be hanged.' And they said: 'Who art thou that sayest to us such things?' And he said to them: 'I am Nicholas the servant of Jesu Christ, whom the Jew hath so cruelly beaten for his goods that ye bare away.' Then they were afeard, and came to the Jew, and heard what he had done to the image, and they told him the miracle, and delivered to him again all his goods. And thus came the thieves to the way of truth, and the Jew to the way of Jesu Christ.

A man, for the love of his son, that went to school for to learn, hallowed, every year, the feast of S. Nicholas much solemnly. On a time it happed that the father had do make ready the dinner, and called many clerks to this dinner. And the devil came to the gate in the habit of a pilgrim for to demand alms; and the father anon commanded his son that he should give alms to the pilgrim. He followed him as he went for to give to him alms, and when he came to the quarfox the devil caught the child and strangled him. And when the father heard this he sorrowed much strongly and wept, and bare the body into his chamber, and began to cry for sorrow, and say: 'Bright sweet son, how is it with thee? S. Nicholas, is this the guerdon that ye have done to me because I have so long served you?' And as he said these words, and other semblable, the child opened his eyes, and awoke like as he had been asleep, and arose up tofore all, and was raised from death to life.

THE SEVEN SLEEPERS

The Seven Sleepers were born in the city of Ephesus. And when Decius the emperor came into Ephesus for the persecution of christen men, he commanded to edify the temples in the middle of the city, so that all should come with him to do sacrifice to the idols. and did do seek all the christian people, and bind them for to make them to do sacrifice, or else to put them to death; in such wise that every man was afeard of the pains that he promised, that the friend forsook his friend, and the son renied his father, and the father the son. And then in this city were founden seven christian men, that is to wit, Maximian, Malchus, Marcianus, Denis, John, Serapion, and Constantine. And when they saw this, they had much sorrow, and because they were the first in the palace that despised the sacrifices, they hid them in their houses, and were in fastings and in prayers. And then they were accused tofore Decius, and came thither, and were found very christian men. Then was given to them space for to repent them, unto the coming again of Decius. And in the meanwhile they dispended their patrimony in alms to the poor people; and assembled them together, and took counsel, and went to the mount of Celion, and there ordained to be more secretly, and there hid them long time. And one of them administered and

served them always. And when he went into the city, he clothed him in the habit of a beggar.

When Decius was come again, he commanded that they should be fetched; and then Malchus, which was their servant and ministered to them meat and drink, returned in great dread to his fellows, and told and showed to them the great fury and woodness of them, and then were they sore afeard. And Malchus set tofore them the loaves of bread that he had brought, so that they were comforted of the meat, and were more strong for to suffer torments. And when they had taken their refection and sat in weeping and wailings, suddenly, as God would, they slept, and when it came on the morn they were sought and could not be found. Wherefore Decius was sorrowful because he had lost such young men. And then they were accused that they were hid in the mount of Celion and had given their goods to poor men and yet abode in their purpose. And then commanded Decius that their kindred should come to him, and menaced them to the death if they said not of them all that they knew. And they accused them, and complained that they had dispended all their riches. Then Decius thought what he should do with them, and, as our Lord would, he enclosed the mouth of the cave wherein they were with stones, to the end that they should die therein for hunger and fault of meat. Then the ministers and two christian men, Theodorus and Rufinus, wrote their martyrdom and laid it subtlely among the stones. And when Decius was dead, and all that generation, three hundred and sixty-two years after and the

thirtieth year of Theodosius the emperor, when the heresy was of them that denied the resurrection of dead bodies, and began to grow; Theodosius, then the most christian emperor, being sorrowful that the faith of our Lord was so felonously demened, for anger and heaviness he clad him in hair and wept every day in a secret place, and led a full holy life; which God, merciful and piteous, seeing, would comfort them that were sorrowful and weeping, and give to them esperance and hope of the resurrection of dead men, and opened the precious treasure of his pity, and raised the foresaid martyrs in this manner following.

He put in the will of a burgess of Ephesus that he would make in that mountain, which was desert and aspre, a stable for his pasturers and herdmen. And it happed that of adventure the masons, that made the said stable, opened this cave. And then these holy saints, that were within, awoke and were raised and intersalued each other, and had supposed verily that they had slept but one night only, and remembered of the heaviness that they had the day tofore. And then Malchus, which ministered to them, said what Decius had ordained of them, for he said: 'We have been sought, like as I said to you yesterday, for to do sacrifice to the idols, that is it that the emperor desireth of us.' And then Maximian answered: 'God our Lord knoweth that we shall never sacrifice'; and comforted his fellows. He commanded to Malchus to go and buy bread in the city, and bade him bring more than he did yesterday, and also to enquire and demand what the

emperor had commanded to do. And then Malchus took five shillings, and issued out of the cave, and when he saw the masons and the stones tofore the cave, he began to bless him, and was much amarvelled. But he thought little on the stones, for he thought on other things. Then came he all doubtous to the gates of the city, and was all amarvelled. For he saw the sign of the cross about the gate, and then, without tarrying, he went to that other gate of the city, and found there also the sign of the cross thereon, and then he had great marvel, for upon every gate he saw set up the sign of the cross; and therewith the city was garnished. And then he blessed him and returned to the first gate, and weened he had dreamed; and after he advised and comforted himself and covered his visage and entered into the city. And when he came to the sellers of bread, and heard the men speak of God, yet then was he more abashed, and said: 'What is this, that no man yesterday durst name Jesu Christ, and now every man confesseth him to be christen? I trow this is not the city of Ephesus, for it is all otherwise builded. It is some other city, I wot not what.' And when he demanded and heard verily that it was Ephesus, he supposed that he had erred, and thought verily to go again to his fellows, and then went to them that sold bread. And when he showed his money the sellers marvelled, and said that one to that other, that this young man had found some old treasure. And when Malchus saw them talk together, he doubted not that they would lead him to the emperor, and was sore afeard, and

prayed them to let him go, and keep both money and bread, but they held him, and said to him: 'Of whence art thou? For thou hast found treasure of old emperors, show it to us, and we shall be fellows with thee and keep it secret.' And Malchus was so afeard that he wist not what to say to them for dread. And when they saw that he spake not they put a cord about his neck, and drew him through the city unto the middle thereof. And tidings were had all about in the city that a young man had found ancient treasure, in such wise that all they of the city assembled about him, and he confessed there that he had found no treasure. And he beheld them all, but he could know no man there of his kinred ne lineage, which he had verily supposed that they had lived, but found none, whereof he stood as he had been from himself, in the middle of the city. And when S. Martin the bishop, and Antipater the consul, which were new come into this city, heard of this thing they sent for him, that they should bring him wisely to them, and his money with him. And when he was brought to the church he weened well he should have been led to the Emperor Decius. And then the bishop and the consul marvelled of the money, and they demanded him where he had found this treasure unknown. And he answered that he had nothing founden, but it was come to him of his kinred and patrimony, and they demanded of him of what city he was. 'I wot well that I am of this city, if this be the city of Ephesus.' And the judge said to him: 'Let thy kinred come and witness for thee.' And he named them, but none

knew them. And they said that he feigned, for to escape from them in some manner. And then said the judge: 'How may we believe thee that this money is come to thee of thy friends, when it appeareth in the scripture that it is more than three hundred and seventy-two years sith it was made and forged, and is of the first days of Decius the emperor, and it resembleth nothing to our money; and how may it come from thy lineage so long since, and thou art young, and wouldst deceive the wise and ancient men of this city of Ephesus? And therefore I command that thou be demened after the law till thou hast confessed where thou hast found this money.' Then Malchus kneeled down tofore them and said: 'For God's sake, lords, say ye to me that I shall demand you, and I shall tell to you all that I have in my heart. Decius the emperor that was in this city, where is he?' And the bishop said to him: 'There is no such at this day in the world that is named Decius; he was emperor many years since.' And Malchus said: 'Sire, hereof I am greatly abashed and no man believeth me; for I wot well that we fled for fear of Decius the emperor, and I saw him, that yesterday he entered into this city, if this be the city of Ephesus.' Then the bishop thought in himself, and said to the judge that, 'this is a vision that our Lord will have showed by this young man.' Then said the young man: 'Follow ye me, and I shall show to you my fellows which be in the mount of Celion, and believe ye them. This know I well, that we fled from the face of the Emperor Decius.' And then they went with him, and a great multitude

of the people of the city with them. And Malchus entered first into the cave to his fellows, and the bishop next after him. And there found they among the stones the letters sealed with two seals of silver. And then the bishop called them that were come thither, and read them tofore them all, so that they that heard it were all abashed and amarvelled. And they saw the saints sitting in the cave, and their visages like unto roses flowering, and they, kneeling down, glorified God. And anon the bishop and the judge sent to Theodosius the emperor, praying him that he would come anon for to see the marvels of our Lord that he had late showed. And anon he arose up from the ground, and took off the sack in which he wept, and glorified our Lord. And came from Constantinople to Ephesus, and all they came against him, and ascended in to the mountain with him together, unto the saints in to the cave.

And as soon as the blessed saints of our Lord saw the emperor come, their visages shone like to the sun. And the emperor entered then, and glorified our Lord and embraced them, weeping upon each of them, and said: 'I see you now like as I should see our Lord raising Lazare.' And then Maximian said to him: 'Believe us, for forsooth our Lord hath raised us tofore the day of the great resurrection. And to the end that thou believe firmly the resurrection of the dead people, verily we be raised as ye here see, and live. And in like wise as the child is in the womb of his mother without feeling harm or hurt, in the same wise we have been living and sleeping in lying here without feeling of anything.' And when

they had said all this, they inclined their heads to the earth, and rendered their spirits at the command of our Lord Jesu Christ, and so died. Then the emperor arose, and fell on them, weeping strongly, and embraced them, and kissed them debonairly. And then he commanded to make precious sepulchres of gold and silver, and to bury their bodies therein. And in the same night they appeared to the emperor, and said to him that he should suffer them to lie on the earth like as they had lain tofore till that time that our Lord had raised them, unto the time that they should rise again. Then commanded the emperor that the place should be adorned nobly and richly with precious stones, and all the bishops that would confess the resurrection should be assoiled. It is in doubt of that which is said that they slept three hundred and sixty-two years; for they were raised the year of our Lord four hundred and seventy-eight, and Decius reigned but one year and three months, and that was in the year of our Lord two hundred and seventy, and so they slept but two hundred and eight years.

S. MACARIUS

S. MACARIUS was in a desert; and entered in to a pit or sepulchre, whereas had been buried many bodies of paynims, for to sleep, and he drew out one of these bodies and laid it under his head instead of a pillow. Then came thither devils for to make him aghast and afeard, and said one to another: 'Come with me to bathe thee.' And the body that lay under his head said: 'I may not come, for I have a pilgrim upon me lying, that I may not move.' For all this S. Macarius was not afeard, but he beat the body with his fist, and said: 'Arise and go if thou mayst.' When the devils saw that they might not make him afeard they cried with a great voice: 'Macarius, thou hast vanquished and overcome us twice.' On a time as Macarius was nigh his house, the devil came with a great scythe on his neck, and would have smitten therewith S. Macarius, and the devil said to him: 'Thou dost to me great violence and force, for I may not prevail against thee. Lo! what thou doest I do; thou fastest and I eat not, thou wakest and I never sleep: but there is one thing in which thou overcomest me.' And Macarius said: 'What is that?' To whom the devil said: 'That is humility, and thy meekness, by which I may not prevail against thee.'

It happed on a time that a great temptation came upon S. Macarius, and much tempted him, and anon

he filled a sack full of stones, and laid it on his neck and bare it many journeys together through the desert. Then another hermit met him and demanded him why he bare so great a burden, and he answered: 'I travail my body because it suffereth not me in peace, and thus I vex him that vexed me.'

This holy abbot S. Macarius saw passing tofore him a devil in the habit of a man, which was the clothing of a herald, all linen full of holes, and in every hole hung a pyolle, and he demanded him whether he went. The devil answered him, I go for to give drink unto these hermits; then demanded him S. Macarius, wherefore he bare so many pyolles. And he answered: 'I shall offer to them one, and if he may not drink of that one, I shall proffer him another, and so the third, and of all the other, each after other, until they may find something pleasant to them for to fall into temptation.' And when he came again, S. Macarius called him, and demanded him what he had found, and he answered that he had evil sped, for they were all so holy and blessed that they recked not of his drink, save one only which is named Theodistus. Then S. Macarius arose and came to these hermits, and found them all in good point save him whom the devil had tempted. Then S. Macarius did so much by his exhortation that he brought him again in the right way. Another time S. Macarius met the devil and demanded him whence he came, and the devil answered: 'I come from visiting thy brethren.' Then said S. Macarius: 'How do they?' The devil answered: 'Evil.' And he asked wherefore, and the devil said: 'For they be all holy,

and that worst is, there was one that was mine, and I have lost him, for he is now made holier than the others.' When S. Macarius heard this he gave laudings and thankings to God.

It happed on a time S. Macarius found in this way the head of a dead man, and he demanded of it whose head it was, and the head answered: 'Of a paynim.' And Macarius said to him: 'Where is thy soul?' He answered: 'In hell'; and he demanded if it were deep in hell, and he said: 'Deeper than is from heaven to earth.' And after he demanded if there were any beneath him, and he said the Jews be lower than he was; he asked if there were any lower or beneath the Jews; to whom he said that the false christian men be yet lower and deeper in hell than the Jews; for, as much as they have despited and villained the blood of Jesu Christ of which they were redeemed, so much the more be they tormented.

An hermit which was in the desert was much tempted for to go again to the world, and he thought in his heart that he should do more good to be among the people than he should do in his hermitage. Then he told all this to S. Macarius, and S. Macarius said to him: 'Thus shalt thou say to thy thoughts, that for the love of Jesu Christ I keep the walls of this cell.'

It happed on a time that S. Macarius killed a fly that bit him, and when he saw the blood of this fly, he repented him, and so, repentant of that, would revenge it, and anon unclothed him and went naked in the desert six months, and suffered himself to be

bitten of the flies. After this S. Macarius when he had long lived, and God had showed many miracles for him, and had flowered in many virtues, he died and rendered his soul unto our Lord Jesu Christ, qui est benedictus in secula seculorum. Amen.

S. ANTHONY

S. ANTHONY was born in Egypt of good and religious father and mother, and when he was but twenty years old, he heard on a time in the church read in the gospel, that said: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give it to poor men'; and then according thereto he sold all that he had, and gave it to the poor people and became an hermit. He had overmany temptations of the devil. On a time when he had overcome the spirit of fornication, the devil came to him in the form of a little child all black, and fell down at his feet and confessed that he was the devil of fornication, which S. Anthony had desired and prayed to see him, for to know him that so tempted young people. Then said S. Anthony: 'Sith I have perceived that thou art so foul a thing, I shall never doubt thee.'

A great multitude of devils so much beat him that his servant bare him upon his shoulders in to his house as he had been dead. When the other hermits were assembled and wept his death, and would have done his service, suddenly S. Anthony revived and made his servant to bear him into the pit again where the devils had so evil beaten him, and began to summon the devils again, which had beaten him, to battles. And anon they came in form of divers beasts wild and savage, of whom that one howled,

another siffled, and another cried, and another brayed and assailed S. Anthony, that one with the horns, the others with their teeth, and the others with their paws and ongles, and disturned and all to-rent his body that he supposed well to die. Then came a clear brightness, and all the beasts fled away, and S. Anthony understood that in this great light our Lord came, and he said twice: 'Who art thou?' The good Jesu answered: 'I am here Anthony.' Then said S. Anthony: 'O good Jesu! where hast thou been so long? why wert thou not here with me at the beginning to help me and to heal my wounds?' Then our Lord said: 'I was here: but I would see and abide to see thy battle; and because thou hast manly fought and well maintained thy battle, I shall make thy name to be spread through all the world.'

S. Anthony was of so great fervour and burning love to God, that when Maximus, the emperor, slew and martyred christian men, he followed the martyrs that he might be a martyr with them and deserve it, and was sorry that martyrdom was not given to him.

After this, as S. Anthony went in desert he found a platter of silver in his way; then he thought whence this platter should come, seeing it was in no way for any man to pass, and also if it had fallen from any man he should have heard it sound in the falling. Then saw he well that the devil had laid it there for to tempt him, and said: 'Ha! devil, thou weenest to tempt me and deceive me, but it shall not be in thy power.' Then the platter vanished away as a little smoke. And in likewise it happed him of a mass of

gold that he found in this way, which the devil had cast for to deceive him, which he took and cast it into the fire and anon it vanished away. After, it happed that S. Anthony on a time was in prayer, and saw in a vision all the world full of snares and gins. Then cried S. Anthony and said: 'O good Lord, who may escape from these snares?' And a voice said to him: 'Very humility shall escape them without more.'

A young man passed by S. Anthony and his bow in his hand, and beheld how S. Anthony played with his fellows, and was evil apaid. Then S. Anthony said to him that he should bend his bow, and so he did, and shot two or three shots tofore him, and anon he unbent his bow. Then demanded him S. Anthony why he held not his bow bent. And he answered that it should then be over weak and feeble; then said to him S. Anthony: 'In likewise play the monks, for to be after more strong to serve God.'

Some hermits came to S. Anthony for to visit him, and their abbot was with them; then said S. Anthony to the hermits: 'Ye have a good wise man with you'; and after he said to the abbot: 'Thou hast founden good brethren.' Then answered the abbot: 'Truly I have good brethren, but there is no door on their house; each body may enter that will, and go into the stable and unbind the ass of within.' And this said he because that the brethren had overmuch their mouths open to speak, for anon as they have thought on a thing is it come to the mouth. Then S. Anthony said: 'Ye ought to know that there be three bodily movings, that one is of

nature, another of overmuch plenty of meats, and the third of the devil.'

On a time as S. Anthony was in the wilderness in his prayer and was weary, he said to our Lord: 'Lord, I have great desire to be saved, but my thoughts let me.' Then appeared an angel to him and said: 'Do as I do, and thou shalt be safe,' and he went out and saw him one while labour and another while pray.

It happed on a time that S. Anthony laboured with his brethren the hermits, and he saw a vision much sorrowful, and therefore he kneeled down on his knees and prayed our Lord that he would empesh the great sorrow that was to come. Then the other hermits demanded what thing it was, and he said that it was a great sorrow: 'for I have seen great plenty of beasts which environed me, which feared all the country, and I wot well that this is to say that there shall come a great trouble of men like unto beasts, that shall defoul the sacraments of holy church.' Then came a voice from heaven to S. Anthony that said that 'great abomination shall come to mine altar.' And anon after, the heresy of Arians began, and much troubled holy church, and did many evils, and slew christian men like sheep upon the altars.

At the last S. Anthony assembled the hermits and gave to them the peace, and died and departed out of this world holily when he was of the age of an hundred and five years. Pray we to him that he pray for us.

S. BENEDICT AND S. SCHOLASTICA

It happed that S. Benet went to visit his sister, named Scholastica, and as they sat at table she prayed her brother that he would abide there all that night, but he in no wise would grant her, and said he might not live out of his cloister. And when she saw that he would not grant to her to abide, she inclined her head and made her prayers to our Lord, and anon it began to thunder and to lighten, and the air to wax dark which tofore was fair and clear, and a great rain fell down so that for nothing he might depart. And like as she wept with her eyen, right so forthwith the rain and storm came, and then she lifted up her head. Then S. Benet said to his sister: 'Almighty God forgive you that ye have done, for ye have letted me that I may not depart hence.' And she said: 'Fair brother, God is more courteous than ye be, for ye would not accept my prayer; but God hath heard me. Now go if ye may.' And then S. Benet abode there all the night, speaking of God between him and his sister without sleeping, till they were both eased. On the morn S. Benet went to his abbey, and on the third day he lift up his eyes to heaven, and saw the soul of his sister mount up into heaven in the likeness of a dove. And anon he did the body of her to be brought to his abbey, and did it to be buried in his tomb which he had do make for himself.

S. AUSTIN, OR AUGUSTINE

S. AUSTIN the noble doctor was born in Africa in the city of Carthage, and was come of noble kindred. And his father was named Patrick and his mother Monica. He was sufficiently instructed in the arts liberal, so that he was reputed for a sufficient philosopher and a right noble doctor, for he learned all by himself, without master, in reading the books of Aristotle and all other that he might find of arts liberal. And he understood them, as he himself witnesseth in the book of Confessions, saying: 'All the books that be called of the arts liberal, then I, most wretched servant of all covetises, read all by myself alone, and understood all them that I might read; and all them of the craft of speaking and of devising, all them of divisions of figures, of music and of numbers, I read and understood without great difficulty, and without teaching of any man; this knowest thou, my Lord God; for the hastiness of understanding and the gift of learning is of thee only and cometh of thy name. But I have not sacrificed to thee therefore; and science without charity edifieth not, but swelleth.' And Austin fell in the error of Manicheans, which affirm that Jesu Christ was fantastic and reny the resurrection of the flesh; and abode therein nine years. And when he was nineteen years of age, he began to read in

a book of philosophy, in which he was taught to despise the vanities of the world. And because that book pleased him well, he began to be sorry that the name of Jesu Christ, which he had learned of his mother, was not therein. And his mother wept oft, and enforced her much to bring him to the verity of the faith.

And as it is read in the book of Confessions, she was in a place much heavy, and herthought that a fair young man was tofore her, that enquired of her the cause of her heaviness, and she said: 'I weep here the loss of my son Austin'; and he answered: 'Be thou sure, for where thou art he is.' And she saw her son beside her. And when she had told this to Austin, he said to his mother: 'Thou art deceived, mother, it was not said so but: Where that I am thou art'; and she said contrary: 'Son, it was not said so to me, but where I am thou art.' And then the mother ententively prayed and required a bishop instantly that he would pray for her son Augustin. And he, being overcome, said to her by the voice of a prophet: 'Go thy way surely; for a son of so many tears may not by possibility perish.'

And when he had certain years taught rhetoric in Carthage he came to Rome secretly, without the knowledge of his mother, and assembled there many disciples. And his mother had followed him unto the gate to make him abide, or else that she should go with him; and he abode that night, but he departed secretly on the morn. And when she apperceived it, she replenished the ears of our Lord with

clamour, and went in the morning and at even to the church, and prayed God for her son.

In that time, they of Milan required a doctor of rhetoric of Symmachus the prefect of Rome, that he might read rhetoric at Milan. And that time Ambrose, servant of God, was bishop of that city, and Augustin was sent at the prayer of them of Milan. And his mother might not rest, but did much pain to come to him, and found him that he neither was very Manichean ne very catholic. And then it happed that Augustin began to haunt with S. Ambrose, and oft heard his predications, and was much ententive to hear if anything were said against the Manicheans or other heresies.

On a time it happed that S. Ambrose disputed long against the error Manichean, and condemned it by open and evident reasons and by authorities, so that this error was all put out of the heart of Augustin. And what befell to him afterward he rehearseth in the book of his Confessions, and saith: 'When I knew thee first thou beatedst away the infirmity of my sight, shining in me forcibly. And I trembled for love and dread, and I found myself right far from thee in a region of unlikeness, like as I heard thy voice from heaven on high, saying: *I am meat of great ones; increase and thou shalt eat me; thou shalt not change me in thee as meat of thy flesh, but thou shalt be changed in me.*' And as he rehearseth there, the life of Jesu Christ pleased him much well, but he doubted yet to go in such distresses. But our Lord anon put in his mind that he should go to Simplician, in whom all divine grace shone, for to

refrain his desires, and for to say to him what manner was convenable to live, for to go in the way of God in which that other went. For all that was done displeased him save the sweetness of God and the beauty of the house of God, which he loved. And Simplician began to exhort him, and S. Augustin exhorted himself and said: 'How many children and maidens serve in the church of God to our Lord: and mayst not thou do that they do in their God and not in themselves? Wherefore tarryest thou? Cast thyself on him and he shall receive thee and reward thee.' And among these words Victorin came to his mind. Then Simplician was much glad, and told to him how Victorin was yet a paynim, and deserved to have a great image to his likeness in the market of Rome, and how he offtimes said that he was a christian man. To whom Simplician said: 'I shall not believe it but if I see thee in the church.' And he answered merrily: 'The walls make not a man christian.' At the last, when he came into the church, he brought to him secretly a book wherein the *Credo* of the mass was, and bade him read. And he ascended upon high, and with voice on high pronounced it; whereof Rome marvelled and the church was joyful, and all cried suddenly: 'Victorin! Victorin!' And anon they held their peace for joy.

And after that there came from Africa a friend of Augustin which was name Poncian, and recounted to him the life and miracles of the great Anthony, that had died lately under Constantine the emperor. And by the ensamples Austin enforced him strongly, so that he assailed his fellow Alipius as well with

cheer as mind, and cried strongly: 'What suffer we? what hear we? Untaught people and foolish ravish and take heaven, and we with our conning and doctrines plunge and sink into hell, and because they go tofore we be ashamed to follow them.' And then he ran into a garden, and, as he saith himself, he cast himself down under a fig-tree and wept right bitterly, and gave out weeping voice because he had tarried so long from day to day, and from time to time. And was greatly tormented, so that he had no manner in himself for sorrow of his long tarrying, like as he writeth in the book of his Confessions and said: 'Alas! Lord, how thou art high in high things and deep in deepness, and departest not ne goest out of the way, and unnethe we come to thee. Ah! Lord,' he said, 'call me, move me, change me, and enlumine me; ravish me and make soft all mine empeshments and lettings! I have loved thee over-late, thou beauty so old and so new, I over-late have loved thee. Thou wert within and I was without, and there I sought thee and in the beauty and fairness that thou hast made I fell all deformed and foul. Thou wert with me, but I was not with thee. Thou hast called and cried and hast broken my deafness. Thou hast enlumined, cleared, and hast put away my blindness. Thou hast replenished me with fragrant odours and I haste me to come to thee. I have tasted thee, and am hungry and desire thee.' And as he wept thus bitterly, he heard a voice saying: 'Take and read.' And anon he opened the book of the apostle, and cast his eyes on the first chapter and read: 'Clothe ye you in our Lord Jesu

Christ.' And anon all the doubts of darkness were extinct in him.

And in the meantime he began to be so greatly tormented with toothache, that almost, he saith, he was brought to believe the opinion of Cornelius the philosopher, which putteth that the sovereign weal of the soul is in wisdom, and the sovereign weal of the body is in suffering no pain ne sorrow. And his pain was so great and vehement that he had lost his speech; wherefore, as he writeth in the book of his Confessions, he wrote in tables of wax that all men should pray for him that our Lord should assuage his pain, and he himself kneeled down with the other, and suddenly he felt himself whole.

And then he signified by letters to the holy man, S. Ambrose, that he [Ambrose] would send to him word, which of the books of holy writ appertaineth best to read in, for to be made most convenable to the christian faith. And he sent to him answer: 'Isaiah the prophet'; because that he was seen to be the shower and pronouncer of the gospel and of calling of men. And when Augustin understood not all the beginning, and supposed all the remnant to be not otherwise than it [the beginning] was to read, he deferred to read them till he were more conning in holy writ.

And when the day of Easter came and Austin was thirty years old, he and his son which was named Adeodatus, a child of noble wit and understanding, whom he had gotten in his youth when he was a paynim and a philosopher; with Alipius his friend; by the merits of his mother and by the preaching of S. Ambrose; received baptism of S. Ambrose. And

then, as it is read, S. Ambrose said: 'Te Deum laudamus,' and S. Austin answered: 'Te dominum confitemur,' and so they two together ordained and made this hymn and sung it unto the end. And so witnesseth it Honorius in his book which is named, The Mirror of the Church. And in some other old books, the title of this hymn or psalm is entitled: *The canticle of Ambrose and of Augustin.*

And anon he was marvellously confirmed in the faith catholic, and forsook all the hope that he had in the world, and renounced the schools that he ruled. And he showeth in his book of Confessions how he was from thenceforth achauffed in the love of God, saying: 'Lord, thou hast throughpierced my heart with thy charity, and I have borne thy words fixed in mine entrails, and the ensamples of thy servants, which thou hast made of black, white and shining, and of dead, living; and of corrupt thoughts thou makest fair, and givest high understanding in heavenly things. I mounted up into the hill of weeping, and thou gavest to me, singing the canticle of grees, sharp arrows and coals wasting; ne I was not in those days fulfilled in thy marvellous sweetness for to consider the height of the divine counsel upon the health of the lineage human. How much have I wept in thy hymns and canticles sweetly sounding, and by the voice of thy Church I have been moved eagerly: the voices have run in mine ears, and thy truth hath dropped in mine heart, and then tears have run down and I was well eased with them. And I cried with an high cry of mine heart: O *in pace*, O *in id ipsum*; O thou that sayest I shall sleep

in that same and take rest, thou art the same, for thou art not changed, and in thee is rest, forgetting all labours. I read all that psalm, and I burned; which sometime had been a barker bitter and blind against the letters honied with the sweetness of heaven and enlumined with thy light. O Jesu Christ my helper, how sweet is it suddenly made to me to lack the sweetnesses of truffes and japes, which were far from me to leave and forsake, and now to leave and forsake them is to me great joy! Thou hast cast them out from me, and thou which art sovereign sweetness hast entered into me for them; which art sweeter than any sweetness or delices, more clear than any light, and more secret than any secret counsels, and more high than all honour, and there is none more high than thou.'

And after this he took Nebridius and Evodius and his mother, and returned again into Africa. But when they came to Tiberina his sweet mother died, and after her death Austin returned unto his proper heritage, and there entended with them that bode with him in fastings and in prayers. He wrote books, and taught them that were not wise, and the fame and renown of him spread over all: and in all his books and works he was holden marvellous.

He refused to come to any city whereas was no bishop, lest he should be let by that office. And in that time was in Hippo a man full of great wealth, which sent to Augustin, that if he would come to him that he might hear the word of his mouth, he might renounce the world. And when S. Augustin

knew it he went hastily thither. And when Valerian, bishop of Hippo, heard his renomee and fame, he ordained him a priest in his church, howbeit that he refused it much and wept. And anon he established a monastery of clerks, and began to live under the rule of the apostles; out of which monastery were ten chosen to be bishops. And because the said bishop was a Greek and but little lettered and taught in Latin tongue, he gave power to Augustin for to preach before himself, against the manner of the church oriental. And therefore many bishops despised him, but he raught not if he did it to be done by the said Augustin, that which he could not do himself. In that time he convanquished Fortunatus the Priest, a Manichean, which was a heretic, and many other heretics, which namely were rebaptized Donatists and Manicheans; all these he confounded and overcame. Then the blessed Valerian doubted lest Augustin should be taken away from him, for to be made and required to be a bishop in another city. And he would have gladly offered to him his bishopric, but he supposed that he would have fled into some secret place, whereas he should not have been found. And then he impetred of the archbishop of Carthage that he might cease and leave his bishopric, and that he would promote Augustin to be bishop of the church of Hippo. But when Augustin heard that, he refused it utterly in all manners: nevertheless he was constrained and so coacted that he took at the last the cure of the bishopric.

His clothing and hosing and shoeing and all his

other adornments and array were not over foul ne over fair, but they were of sufficient, moderate and competent habit. And he said of himself: 'I am ashamed of precious clothing, and therefore when any is given to me I sell it; for clothing may not be common, the price is common.' He used always his table sparing; he used always pottage and wortes, but oftimes he had flesh for guests and sick people, and he loved better at his table lessons and disputations than feasting, and had these verses written at his table:

> Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere vitam,
> Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi:

that is to say: 'Whosoever loves to missay any creature that is absent, it may be said that this table is denied to him at all.' For, on a time, as a man had loosed his tongue to missay of a bishop familiar with him, he rebuked him cruelly, and said that, unless he should leave off he would or raze away these verses or go from the table.

He was of so great purity and humility, that the right little sins which we repute for none he confessed them to God (as it appeareth in the book of his Confessions) and accused himself meekly to our Lord. For he accused himself there, that when he was a child, how he played at the ball when he should go to school. Also of that he would not learn of his father and mother and of his masters, but by constraint. Also, when he was a child, of that he read gladly the fables of Æneas and complained Dido which died for love. Also of that he had stolen meat from the table out of the celyer of his

father and mother that he had given to children that played with him, and of that that at the plays and games he had victory by fraud. Also he confessed him of stealing of pears off a pear tree standing nigh his vineyard when he was sixteen years old. In the same book he accused him of that little delectation which sometime he felt in eating, and said: 'Thou hast taught me that I should take nourishing of meat like a medicine. Drunkenness is far from me; I beseech thee, Lord, have mercy on me, that it approach not me. And, Lord, who is he, but sometime he is ravished out of his meats? Who that it be that is not, certainly is much perfect, it am not I, for I am a sinful man.' No man, saith he, ought to be sure in his life, for it is called all temptation; that is to wit, that he may be made of the worse the better and not of the better the worse. And he confessed him also of hearing, saying: 'The delights and voluptuosities of mine ears have bowed and subdued me, but thou hast unbound and delivered me; for when it happed me that the song more moved me than the thing sung, I confess me sore to have sinned, and then I would that I had not heard him that so sang.' And then he accused him of seeing; of that he saw sometime gladly the hound running, and when he went sometime by adventure by the fields, he beheld gladly hunting, and when he was at home he beheld oftimes the spincoppes or spiders taking flies by the nets of their cobwebs: hereof he confessed him to our Lord, for sometime they took from him good thoughts and letted him of some good works. And he accused him of the appetite of

praising and of the moving of vain glory, saying that 'he that would be praised of men, and thou blamest him, shall not be defended of men when thou judgest him, nor be withdrawn when thou shalt damn him. For man is praised for some gift that thou hast given to him: nevertheless he enjoyeth more of that he is praised than he doth of the gift that thou hast given.'

This holy man confounded right valiantly the heretics, insomuch that they preached openly that it were no sin to slay Augustin, and said that he ought to be slain like a wolf; and they affirmed that God pardoned all the sins to them that slew him; and he was oftimes awaited of them, and when he went in to any places, they set spies, but, by the grace of God, they were deceived of their voyage and might not find him.

He remembered always the poor people, and succoured them freely of that he might have, and sometimes he commanded to break the vessels of the church for to give to the poor people, and dispend it among the needy. He would never buy house nor field nor town, and refused many heritages that were fallen to him; he said that they appertained to the children of the dead people, and to them that were next of their kin, and it sufficed him enough that which fell to him by the church. And yet he was not ententive for the love of such goods, but day and night he thought in divine scriptures. He had never study in new fabrics nor buildings; nevertheless he would not forbid them that would edify, if that he saw them not do it disattemperately.

He praised them strongly that had desire to die,

and remembered much oft thereupon the ensamples of three bishops. For when Ambrose was at his end, he was prayed that he should get longer space of his life by his prayers. He answered: 'I have not lived so that I am ashamed to live among you, and I am not afraid to die, for I have a good Lord'; which answer Augustin praised marvellously. And also he said of another bishop, that it was said to him that he was yet much necessary to the church, and that he should pray to God for the deliverance of his sickness: and he said: 'If I die never, well: if ever, wherefore not now?'[1] And of another bishop, that when he was in grevious sickness and prayed that God would send him health, a youngling appeared to him, and looked sternly on him, and said to him by disdain: 'Thou doubtest to suffer, thou willest not to die; what shall I do to thee?'

He would never have that any woman should dwell with him, neither his own sisters, nor the daughters of his brother, which served God together. For he said, though of his sister nor of his nieces might none evil suspicion grow, nevertheless because that such persons might not be without other that served them, and also other might come to them, and of such might the thoughts be moved to temptations, or might be defamed by evil suspicion of men. He would never speak alone with any woman but if some secret demanded it. He gave never no goods to his kin, nor to his cousins, nor he recked whether they abounded or were needy. He would gladlier hear causes of unknown men than of his friends, for

[1] Si nunquam, bene; si aliquando, quare non modo?

between them he might freely know the default, and of them make one his friend, [him] for whom by right he might give sentence; but of his friends he was sure to lose one, that was, him against whom he gave the sentence. He was desired to preach the word of God in many churches, and there he preached and converted many from errors. When he preached he had a custom sometime to depart him from his purpose, and then he said that God had ordained that for the profit of some person; as it appeared to a Manichean, which in a sermon of Augustin whereas he departed from his matter and preached against the same error, and thereby he was converted to the faith.

In that time that the Goths had taken Rome, and that the idolators and false christian men enjoyed them thereof, then made S. Augustin therefore the book of the city of God, in which he showed first that righteous men were destroyed in this life, and the evil men flourished. And the treatise of the two cities is Jerusalem and Babylon and of the kings of them. For the king of Jerusalem is Jesu Christ, and he of Babylon is the devil, the which two cities make two loves in them. For the city of the devil maketh a love to himself, growing the same unto despite of God. And the city of God made a love growing unto the despite of him [the devil].

In that time the Vandals about the year of our Lord four hundred and forty took all the province of Africa and wasted all and spared neither man nor woman nor for order nor for age, and after came to the city of Hippo and assieged it with

great power. And under that tribulation Augustin before all other led a bitter and right holy life, for the tears of his eyes were to him bread day and night, when he saw some slain, others chased away, the churches without priests, and the city wasted with the inhabitants. And among these many evils, by the sentence of a certain wise man he comforted himself, saying: 'Thou shalt not be great in weening great things, because that the woods and stones fall, and they that be mortal die.' He called his brethren, and said: 'I have prayed our Lord that either he take away from us these perils or send to us patience, or take me out of this life that I be no more constrained to have so many cursednesses or ill-haps.' And the third thing that he required he had. For in the third month of the siege he travailed in the fevers, and lay down on his bed. And when he understood his departing he did do write the seven psalms of penance in a place against the wall, and read them lying in his bed and wept abundantly. And because he should entend to God the more diligently, and that his entent should not be letted by nobody, ten days tofore his death he suffered nobody to enter in to him but if it were his physician, or else when his refection was brought him.

A certain sick man came because he should lay his hand on him and thereby to heal him of his infirmity: and S. Augustin answered to him: 'Son, that which thou requirest of me weenest thou that I may do such thing that I ne never did? If I might do it, I would then heal myself.' And the man required of him always, affirming that he was

so commanded in a vision to come to him. And then he prayed for him, and he received health. He healed many sick people and did many other miracles.

Then, when his departing approached, he enseigned his brethren that they should retain in mind that no man, of what excellence that he were, ought not to die without confession, ne without to receive his Saviour. And when he came to the last hour he felt him whole in all his members, of good entendment, clear seeing and hearing, and in the year of his age three score and six, and of his bishopric forty, he put himself in prayers with his brethren, which praying he departed out of this life and went unto our Lord. And he made no testament, for he was poor in Jesu Christ and had not whereof.

And thus S. Augustin, right clear by light of wisdom, fighting in defence of truth, of faith and of garnison of the church, surmounted all the other doctors of the church as well by engine as by conning, flourishing without comparison as well by example of virtues as by abundance of doctrine.

There was a man, which had great devotion to S. Augustin, gave great good to a monk that kept the body of S. Augustin, for to have a finger of the glorious saint. And this monk took this money and delivered to him the finger of another dead man, wrapped in silk, and feigned that it was the finger of the glorious S. Austin. And the good man received it much honourably and in great reverence, and honoured it every day devoutly and touched withal his eyes and his mouth, and oft embraced it against

his breast. And God by his mercy, that beholdeth all things, and the faith of this man, gave to him for that finger the very proper finger of S. Augustin, and when he came into his country, there were many miracles showed thereby. The renown and fame thereof came to Pavia of this finger, and the monk aforesaid affirmed always that it was the finger of another dead man. The sepulchre was opened for to know the truth, and it was found that there lacked one of the fingers of the glorious saint. And when the abbot had knowledge of this thing, he put out the monk of that office and tormented and punished him sore.

Many other miracles hath God showed by his life, and also after his death, which were overlong to write in this book, for they would, I suppose, contain a book as much as all this and more, but among other corrections, I will set herein one miracle, which I have seen painted on an altar of S. Austin at the black friars at Antwerp, howbeit I find it not in the legend, mine exemplar, neither in English, French, ne in Latin. It was so that this glorious doctor made and compiled many volumes, as afore is said, among whom he made a book of the Trinity, in which he studied and mused sore in his mind; so far forth that on a time as he went by the sea-side in Africa, studying on the Trinity, he found by the sea-side a little child which had made a little pit in the sand, and in his hand a little spoon. And with the spoon he took out water of the large sea and poured it into the pit. And when S. Augustin beheld him he marvelled, and demanded him what he did. And

he answered and said: 'I will lade out and bring all this water of the sea into this pit.' 'What?' said he; 'it is impossible; how may it be done, sith the sea is so great and large, and thy pit and spoon so little?' 'Yes, forsooth,' said he; 'I shall lightlier and sooner draw all the water of the sea and bring it into this pit than thou shalt bring the mystery of the Trinity and his divinity into thy little understanding as to the regard thereof; for the mystery of the Trinity is greater and larger to the comparison of thy wit and brain than is this great sea unto this little pit.' And therewith the child vanquished away. Then here may every man take ensample that no man, and especially simple lettered men, ne unlearned, presume to intermit ne to muse on high things of the godhead, farther than we be informed by our faith, for our only faith shall suffice us.

Then herewith I make an end of the life of this glorious doctor S. Austin, to whom let us devoutly pray that he be a mediator and advocate unto the blessed Trinity, that we may amend our sinful life in this transitory world, that when we shall depart we may come to everlasting bliss in heaven. Amen.

S. BRANDON

S. BRANDON, the holy man, was a monk, and born in Ireland; and there he was abbot of a house wherein were a thousand monks, and there he had a full strait and holy life in great penance and abstinence, and he governed his monks full virtuously. And then within short time after there came to him a holy abbot that hight Beryne to visit him, and each of them was joyful of other. And then S. Brandon began to tell to the abbot Beryne of many wonders that he had seen in divers lands, and when Beryne heard that of S. Brandon, he began to sigh and sore weep; and S. Brandon comforted him the best wise he could, saying: 'Ye come hither for to be joyful with me; and therefore for God's love leave your mourning and tell me what marvels ye have seen in the great sea-ocean that compasseth all the world about, and all other waters come out of him which runneth in all parts of the earth.' And then Beryne began to tell to S. Brandon and to his monks the marvels that he had seen, full sore weeping, and said: 'I have a son, his name is Mervok, and he was a monk of great fame, which had great desire to seek about by ship in divers countries to find a solitary place wherein he might dwell secretly, out of the business of the world, for to serve God quietly with more devotion; and I counselled him to sail

into an yland far in the sea, beside the mountain of stones which is full well known, and then he made him ready and sailed thither with his monks. And when he came thither he liked that place full well, where he and his monks served our Lord full devoutly.'

And then Beryne saw in a vision that this monk Mervok was sailed right far eastward in the sea, more than three days' sailing, and suddenly to his seeming there came a dark cloud and overcovered them, that a great part of the day they saw no light, and as our Lord would, the cloud passed away and they saw a full fair yland, and thitherward they drew. In that yland was joy and mirth enough, and the earth of that yland shined as bright as the sun, and there were the fairest trees and herbs that ever any man saw, and there were many precious stones shining bright, and every herb there was full of flowers, and every tree full of fruit, so that it was a glorious sight and a heavenly joy to abide there. And there, there came to them a fair young man, and full courteously he welcomed them all, and called every monk by his name, and said that they were much bound to praise the name of our Lord Jesu, that would of his grace show to them that glorious place where is ever day and never night, and this place is called Paradise terrestrial. By this yland is another yland wherein no man may come, and this young man said to them: 'Ye have been here half a year without meat, drink, or sleep'; and they supposed that they had not been there the space of half an hour, so merry and joyful they were there.

And the young man told them that this is the place that Adam and Eve dwelt in first and ever should have dwelled here, if that they had not broken the commandment of God. And then the young man brought them to their ship again, and said they might no longer abide there, and when they were all shipped, suddenly this young man vanished away out of their sight. And then within short time after, by the purveyance of our Lord Jesu Christ, they came to the abbey where S. Brandon dwelled, and then he with his brethren received them goodly and demanded them where they had been so long, and they said: 'We have been in the land of Behest tofore the gates of Paradise, whereas is ever day and never night,' and they said all that the place is full delectable, for yet all their clothes smelled of that sweet and joyful place.

And then S. Brandon purposed soon after for to seek that place by God's help, and anon began to purvey for a good ship and a strong, and vitailled it for seven years. And then he took his leave of all his brethren and took twelve monks with him, but ere they entered into the ship they fasted forty days and lived devoutly, and each of them received the sacrament. And when S. Brandon with his twelve monks were entered in to the ship, there came other two of his monks and prayed him that they might sail with him, and then he said: 'Ye may sail with me, but one of you shall go to hell ere ye come again,' but not the less for that they would go with him. And then S. Brandon bade the shipmen to wind up the sail and forth they sailed in God's name, so that

on the morrow they were out of sight of any land. And forty days and forty nights after they sailed plat east, and then they saw an yland far from them, and they sailed thitherward as fast as they could, and they saw a great rock of stone appear above all the water, and three days they sailed about it ere they could get into the place; but at the last by the purveyance of God they found a little haven and there went aland every each one. And then suddenly came a fair hound, and fell down at the feet of S. Brandon and made him good cheer in his manner; and then he bade his brethren be of good cheer, 'for our Lord hath sent to us his messenger to lead us into some good place.' And the hound brought them into a fair hall where they found the tables spread, ready set full of good meat and drink. And then S. Brandon said graces, and then he and his brethren sat down and ate and drank of such as they found, and there were beds ready for them, wherein they took their rest after their long labour.

And on the morn they returned again to their ship, and sailed a long time in the sea after, ere they could find any land, till at last by the purveyance of God, they saw far from them a full fair yland, full of green pasture, wherein were the whitest and greatest sheep that ever they saw. For every sheep was as great as an ox, and soon after came to them a goodly old man, which welcomed them and made them good cheer, and said: 'This is the yland of sheep, and here is never cold weather, but ever summer, and that causeth the sheep to be so great and white; they eat of the best grass and herbs that

is owhere.' And then this old man took his leave of them and bade them sail forth right east, and within short time by God's grace, they should come into a place like Paradise, wherein they should keep their Eastertide.

And then they sailed forth, and came soon after to that land, but were afeared because of little depth in some places, and in some places were great rocks; but at the last they went upon an yland, weening that they had been safe, and made thereon a fire for to dress their dinner; but S. Brandon abode still in the ship; and when the fire was right hot and the meat nigh sodden, then this yland began to move, whereof the monks were afeard, and fled anon to ship and left the fire and meat behind them, and marvelled sore of the moving. And S. Brandon comforted them, and said that it was a great fish named Jasconye, which laboureth night and day to put his tail in his mouth, but for greatness he may not. And then anon they sailed west three days and three nights ere they saw any land, wherefore they were right heavy; but soon after, as God would, they saw a fair yland full of flowers, herbs, and trees, whereof they thanked God of his good grace, and anon they went on land, and when they had gone long in this they found a full fair well, and thereby stood a fair tree full of boughs, and on every bough sat a fair bird, and they sat so thick on the tree that unnethe any leaf of the tree might be seen. The number of them was so great, and they sang so merrily that it was a heavenly noise to hear; wherefore S. Brandon kneeled down on his knees and

wept for joy, and made his prayers devoutly to our Lord God to know what these birds meant.

And then anon one of the birds fled from the tree to S. Brandon, and he with flickering of his wings made a full merry noise like a fiddle, that him seemed he heard never so joyful a melody. And then S. Brandon commanded the bird to tell him the cause why they sat so thick on the tree and sang so merrily; and then the bird said: 'Sometime we were angels in heaven, but when our master Lucifer fell down into hell for his high pride, we fell with him for our offences, some higher and some lower after the quality of the trespass; and because our trespass is but little, therefore our Lord hath set us here out of all pain, in full great joy and mirth after his pleasing, here to serve him on this tree in the best manner we can. The Sunday is a day of rest from all worldly occupation, and therefore that day all we be made as white as any snow for to praise our Lord in the best wise we may.' And then this bird said to S. Brandon: 'That it is twelve months passed that ye departed from your abbey, and in the seventh year hereafter, ye shall see the place that ye desire to come to, and all these seven years ye shall keep your Easter here with us every year, and in the end of the seventh year ye shall come into the land of Behest.' And this was on Easter day that the bird said these words to S. Brandon; and then this fowl flew again to his fellows that sat on the tree, and then all the birds began to sing evensong so merrily that it was a heavenly noise to hear. And after supper S. Brandon and his fellows

went to bed and slept well, and on the morn they arose betimes, and then these birds began matins, prime, and hours, and all such service as christen men use to sing. And S. Brandon with his fellows abode there eight weeks, till Trinity Sunday was passed, and they sailed again to the yland of sheep and there they vitailled them well, and sith took their leave of that old man, and returned again to ship. And then the bird of the tree came again to S. Brandon and said: 'I am come to tell you that ye shall sail from hence into an yland wherein is an abbey of twenty-four monks, which is from this place many a mile, and there ye shall hold your Christmas, and your Easter with us, like as I told you'; and then this bird flew to his fellows again. And then S. Brandon and his fellows sailed forth in the ocean, and soon after fell a great tempest on them in which they were greatly troubled long time, and sore forlaboured; and after that they found by the purveyance of God an yland which was far from them, and then they full meekly prayed our Lord to send them thither in safety, but it was forty days after ere they came thither; wherefore all the monks were so weary of that trouble that they set little price by their lives, and cried continually to our Lord to have mercy on them, and bring them to that yland in safety. And by the purveyance of God they came at the last into a little haven; but it was so strait that unnethe the ship might come in; and after they came to an anchor, and anon the monks went to land. And when they had long walked about, at the last they found two fair wells, that one was fair and clear

water, and that other was somewhat troubly and thick. And then they thanked our Lord full humbly that had brought them thither in safety, and they would fain have drunk of that water, but S. Brandon charged them they should not take without licence. 'For if we abstain us a while our Lord will purvey for us in the best wise.' And anon after came to them a fair old man with hoar hair, and welcomed them full meekly and kissed S. Brandon, and led them by many a fair well till they came to a fair abbey, where they were received with great honour and solemn procession with twenty-four monks, all in royal copes of cloth of gold and a royal cross was before them. And then the abbot welcomed S. Brandon and his fellowship, and kissed them full meekly, and took S. Brandon by the hand and led him with his monks into a fair hall, and set them down arow upon the bench, and the abbot of the place washed all their feet with fair water of the well that they saw before, and after led them into the fraitour and there set them among his convent. And anon there came one by the purveyance of God which served them well of meat and drink, for every monk had set before him a fair white loaf and white roots and herbs which was right delicious, but they wist not what roots they were. And they drank of the water of the fair clear well that they saw before when they came first yland, which S. Brandon forbade them. And then the abbot came and cheered S. Brandon and his monks, and prayed them eat and drink for charity; 'for every day our Lord sendeth a goodly old man that covereth this table

and setteth our meat and drink tofore us, but we know not how it cometh, ne we ordain never no meat ne drink for us, and yet we have been eighty years here, and ever our Lord, worshipped may he be, feedeth us. We be twenty-four monks in number, and every ferial day of the week he sendeth to us twelve loaves, and every Sunday and feast-day twenty-four loaves, and the bread that we leave at dinner we eat at supper, and now at your coming our Lord hath sent to us forty-eight loaves, for to make you and us merry together as brethren. And always twelve of us go to dinner whiles other twelve keep the quire, and thus have we done these eighty years, for so long have we dwelled here in this abbey. And we came hither out of the abbey of S. Patrick in Ireland, and thus as ye see our Lord hath purveyed for us, but none of us knoweth how it cometh, but God alone, to whom be given honour and laud world without end. And here in this land is ever fair weather, and none of us hath been sick sith we came hither. And when we go to mass, or to any other service of our Lord in the church, anon seven tapers of wax be set in the quire and be lighted at every time without man's hand, and so burn day and night at every hour of service, and never waste ne minish as long as we have been here, which is eighty years.' And then S. Brandon went to the church with the abbot of the place, and there they said evensong together full devoutly; and then S. Brandon looked upward toward the crucifix, and saw our Lord hanging on the cross, which was made of fine crystal and curiously wrought. And in the quire were twenty-

four seats for twenty-four monks, and the seven tapers burning, and the abbot's seat was made in the midst of the quire, and then S. Brandon demanded of the abbot how long they had kept that silence, that none of them spake to other, and he said: 'These twenty-four years we spake never one to another.' And then S. Brandon wept for joy of their holy conversation. And then S. Brandon desired of the abbot that he and his monks might dwell there still with him. To whom the abbot said: 'Sir, that may ye not do in no wise, for our Lord hath showed to you in what manner ye shall be guided till the seven years be fulfilled, and after that term thou shalt with thy monks return into Ireland in safety, but one of the two monks that came last to you shall dwell in the yland of ankers, and that other shall go quick to hell.' And as S. Brandon kneeled in the church he saw a bright shining angel come in at the window, and lighted all the lights in the church, and then he flew out again at the window unto heaven, and then S. Brandon marvelled greatly how the light burned so fair and wasted not. And then the abbot said that it is written that Moses saw a bush all on afire and yet it burned not: 'and therefore marvel not hereof, for the might of our Lord is now as great as it ever was.'

And when S. Brandon had dwelled there from Christmas even till the twelfth day was passed, then he took his leave of the abbot and convent and returned with his monks to his ship, and sailed from thence with his monks toward the abbey of S. Illaries; but they had great tempests in the sea

from that time till Palm-Sunday ; and then they came to the yland of sheep, and there were received of the old man, which brought them to a fair hall and served them. And on Shere-Thursday after supper he washed their feet and kissed them, like as our Lord did to his disciples, and there abode till Saturday, Easter-even ; and they departed and sailed to the place where the great fish lay, and anon they saw their caldron upon the fishes back, which they had left there twelve months tofore. And there they kept the service of the resurrection on the fishes back, and after, they sailed that same day by the morning to the yland whereas the tree of birds was, and then the said bird welcomed S. Brandon and all his fellowship, and went again to the tree and sang full merrily ; and there he and his monks dwelled from Easter till Trinity Sunday as they did the year before, in full great joy and mirth. And daily they heard the merry service of the birds sitting on the tree. And then the bird told to S. Brandon that he should return again at Christmas to the abbey of monks, and at Easter thither again, and the other deal of the year labour in the ocean in full great perils, and from year to year till the seven years be accomplished. 'And then shall ye come to the joyful place of Paradise and dwell there forty days in full great joy and mirth ; and after, ye shall return home into your own abbey in safety, and there end your life, and come to the bliss of heaven, to which our Lord bought you with his precious blood.' And then the angel of our Lord ordained all thing that was needful to S. Brandon and to his monks in

vitailles and all other things necessary ; and then they thanked our Lord of his great goodness that he had showed to them oft in their great need, and then sailed forth into the great sea ocean, abiding the mercy of our Lord in great trouble and tempests.

And soon after came to them an horrible fish which followed the ship long time, casting so much water out of his mouth into the ship that they supposed to have been drowned, wherefore they devoutly prayed God to deliver them of that great peril. And anon after, came another fish greater than he, out of the west sea, and fought with him, and at the last clave him into three pieces, and then returned again. And then they thanked meekly our Lord of their deliverance from this great peril, but they were in great heaviness because their vitailles were nigh spent. But by the ordinance of our Lord there came a bird and brought to them a great branch of a vine full of red grapes, by which they lived fourteen days ; and then they came to a little yland, wherein were many vines full of grapes, and they there landed and thanked God, and gathered as many grapes as they lived by forty days after, always sailing in the sea in many storms and tempests. And as they thus sailed, suddenly came flying towards them a great gryppe which assailed them and was like to have destroyed them. Wherefore they devoutly prayed for help and aid of our Lord Jesu Christ. And then the bird of the tree of the yland where they had holden their Easter tofore, came to the gryppe and smote out both his eyes and after slew him, whereof they thanked our Lord ; and

then sailed forth continually till S. Peter's day, and then sang they solemnly their service in the honour of the feast. And in that place the water was so clear that they might see all the fishes that were about them, whereof they were full sore aghast, and the monks counselled S. Brandon to sing no more, for all the fishes lay then as they had slept. And then S. Brandon said: 'Dread ye not, for ye have kept by two Easters the feast of the Resurrection upon the great fishes back, and therefore dread ye not of these little fishes.' And then S. Brandon made him ready and went to mass, and bade his monks to sing the best way they could. And then anon all the fishes awoke, and came about the ship so thick that unnethe they might see the water for the fishes, and when the mass was done all the fishes departed so as they were no more seen. And seven days they sailed always in that clear water.

And then there came a south wind and drove the ship northward, whereas they saw an yland full dark and full of stench and smoke, and there they heard great blowing and blasting of bellows, but they might see nothing, but heard great thundering, whereof they were sore afeard, and blessed them oft. And soon after there came one starting out all burning in fire, and stared full ghastly on them with great staring eyes, of whom the monks were aghast; and at his departing from them he made the horriblest cry that might be heard; and soon there came a great number of fiends and assailed them with hooks and burning iron malles, which ran on the water, following their ship fast, in such wise that it seemed all the

sea to be on fire. But by the pleasure of our Lord they had no power to hurt ne grieve them ne their ship, wherefore the fiends began to roar and cry, and threw their hooks and malles at them. And they then were sore afraid, and prayed to God for comfort and help; for they saw the fiends all about the ship, and them seemed then all the yland and the sea to be on fire. And with a sorrowful cry all those fiends departed from them and returned to the place that they came from. And then S. Brandon told to them that this was a part of hell, and therefore he charged them to be steadfast in the faith, for they should yet see many a dreadful place ere they came home again. And then came the south wind, and drove them farther into the north, where they saw a hill all of fire, and a foul smoke and stench coming from thence, and the fire stood on each side of the hill like a wall all burning. And then one of his monks began to cry and weep full sore, and said that his end was come, and that he might abide no longer in the ship. And anon he leapt out of the ship into the sea, and then he cried and roared full piteously, cursing the time that he was born, and also father and mother that begat him, because they saw no better to his correction in his young age: 'for now I must go to perpetual pain.' And then the saying of S. Brandon was verified that he said to him when he entered; therefore it is good a man to do penance and forsake sin, for the hour of death is uncertain.

And then anon the wind turned into the north and drove the ship into the south, which sailed seven days continually, and they came to a great rock

standing in the sea, and thereon sat a naked man in full great misery and pain, for the waves of the sea had so beaten his body that all the flesh was gone off, and nothing left but sinews and bare bones. And when the waves were gone, there was a canvas that hung over his head which beat his body full sore with the blowing of the wind, and also there were two ox-tongues and a great stone that he sat on, which did him full great ease. And then S. Brandon charged him to tell him what he was, and he said: 'My name is Judas that sold our Lord Jesu Christ for thirty pence, which sitteth here thus wretchedly; howbeit I am worthy to be in the greatest pain that is; but our Lord is so merciful that he hath rewarded me better than I have deserved, for of right my place is in the burning hell; but I am here but certain times of the year, that is, from Christmas to twelfth day, and from Easter till Whitsuntide be past, and every feastful day of our Lady, and every Saturday noon till Sunday, that evensong be done; but all other times I lie still in hell in full burning fire, with Pilate, Herod, and Caiaphas; therefore accursed be the time that ever I knew them.' And then Judas prayed S. Brandon to abide still there all that night, and that he would keep him there still, that the fiends should not fetch him to hell. And he said: 'With God's help thou shalt abide here all this night.' And then he asked Judas what cloth that was that hung over his head; and he said it was a cloth that he gave to a leper, which was bought with the money that he stole from our Lord 'when I bare his purse; wherefore it doth to me full

great pain now, in beating my face with the blowing of the wind; and these two ox-tongues that hang here above me I gave them sometime to two priests to pray for me, them I bought with mine own money, and therefore they ease me because the fishes of the sea gnaw on them and spare me; and this stone that I sit on lay sometime in a desolate place where it eased no man, and I took it thence and laid it in a foul way where it did much ease to them that went by that way, and therefore it easeth me now; for every good deed shall be rewarded and every evil deed shall be punished.' And the Sunday, against even, there came a great multitude of fiends, blasting and roaring, and bade S. Brandon go thence that they might have their servant Judas, 'for we dare not come into the presence of our master but if we bring him to hell with us.' And then said S. Brandon: 'I let not you to do your master's commandment, but by the power of our Lord Jesu Christ I charge you to leave him this night till to-morrow.' They said: 'How darest thou help him that so sold his master for thirty pence to the Jews, and caused him also to die the most shameful death upon the cross?' And then S. Brandon charged the fiends by his passion that they should not noy him that night. And then the fiends went their way roaring and crying towards hell to their master the great devil; and then Judas thanked S. Brandon so ruthfully, that it was pity to see; and on the morn the fiends came with a horrible noise, saying that they had that night suffered great pain because they brought not Judas and said that he should suffer double pain the six

days following, and they took then Judas, trembling for fear, with them to pain.

And after, S. Brandon sailed southward three days and three nights, and on the Friday they saw an yland, and then S. Brandon began to sigh and said: 'I see the yland wherein S. Paul the hermit dwelleth, and hath dwelled there forty years without meat and drink ordained by man's hand.' And when they came to the land, S. Paul came and welcomed them humbly. He was old and foregrown, so that no man might see his body, of whom S. Brandon said weeping: 'Now I see a man that liveth more like an angel than a man; wherefore we wretches may be ashamed that we live not better.' Then S. Paul said to S. Brandon: 'Thou art better than I, for our Lord hath showed to thee more of his privities than he hath done to me, wherefore thou oughtest to be more praised than I.' To whom S. Brandon said: 'We be monks, and must labour for our meat, but God hath provided for thee such meat as thou holdest thee pleased, wherefore thou art much better than I.' To whom S. Paul said: 'Sometime I was a monk of S. Patrick's Abbey in Ireland, and was warden of the place whereas men enter into S. Patrick's Purgatory: and on a day there came one to me, and I asked him what he was, and he said: I am your abbot Patrick; and charge thee that thou depart from hence to-morn early to the seaside, and there thou shalt find a ship into which thou must enter, which God hath ordained for thee, whose will thou must accomplish. And so the next day I arose and went forth and found the ship, in which I entered, and by the purveyance of

God was I brought into this yland the seventh day after. And then I left the ship and went to land, and there I walked up and down a good while, and then, by the purveyance of God, there came an otter, going on his hinder feet, and brought me a flint stone and an iron to smite fire with, in his two foreclaws of his feet, and also he had about his neck great plenty of fish, which he cast down before me and went his way. And I smote fire, and made a fire of sticks, and did seethe the fish, by which I lived three days; and then the otter came again and brought to me fish for other three days, and thus he hath done these fifty-one years, through the grace of God. And there was a great stone, out of which our Lord made to spring fair water, clear and sweet, whereof I drink daily, and thus have I lived one and fifty years. And I was forty years old when I came hither, and am now one hundred and eleven years old, and abide till it please our Lord to send for me, and if it pleased him I would fain be discharged of this wretched life.' And then he bade S. Brandon to take of the water of the well, and to carry into his ship: 'For it is time that thou depart, for thou hast a great journey to do, for thou shalt sail to an yland which is forty days sailing hence, where thou shalt hold thine Easter like as thou hast done tofore, whereas the tree of birds is; and from thence thou shalt sail into the land of Behest, and shalt abide there forty days, and after return home into thy country in safety.'

And then these holy men took leave each of other, and they wept both full sore, and kissed each other; and then S. Brandon entered into his ship and sailed

forty days even south in full great tempest; and on Easter even came to their procurator, which made to them good cheer as he had beforetime. And from thence they came to the great fish, whereon they said matins and mass on Easter day; and when the mass was done the fish began to move and swam forth fast into the sea, whereof the monks were sore aghast which stood upon him; for it was a great marvel to see such a fish, so great as all a country, for to swim so fast in the water; but by the will of our Lord this fish set all the monks aland in the paradise of birds, all whole and sound, and then returned to the place he came from. And then S. Brandon and his monks thanked our Lord of their deliverance of the great fish, and kept their Eastertide till Trinity Sunday, like as they had done beforetime, and after this they took their ship and sailed east forty days.

And at the forty days end it began to hail right fast, and therewith came a dark mist which lasted long after, which feared S. Brandon and his monks, and they prayed to our Lord to keep and help them. And then anon came their procurator and bade them to be of good cheer, for they were come into the land of Behest. And soon after that mist passed away, and anon they saw the fairest country eastward that any man might see, and it was so clear and bright that it was a heavenly sight to behold, and all the trees were charged with ripe fruit, and herb full of flowers. In which land they walked forty days, but they could see none end of that land, and there was always day and never night, and the land temperate,

ne too hot ne too cold. And at the last they came to a fair river, but they durst not go over. And there came to them a fair young man and welcomed them courteously, and called each of them by his name, and did great reverence to S. Brandon, and said to them: 'Be ye now joyful, for this is the land that ye have sought. But our Lord will that ye depart hence hastily, and he will show to you more of his secrets when ye come again into the sea; and our Lord will that you lade your ship with the fruit of this land, and hie you hence, for ye may no longer abide here; but thou shalt sail again into thine own country, and soon after thou comest home thou shalt die. And this water that thou seest here departeth the world asunder; for on that other side of this water may no man come that is in this life; and the fruit that ye see here is alway thus ripe every time of the year, and always it is here light as ye now see; and he that keepeth our Lord's hests at all times shall see this land ere he pass out of this world.' And then S. Brandon and his monks took of that fruit as much as they would, and also took with them great plenty of precious stones; and then took their leave, and went to ship weeping sore because they might no longer abide there. And then they took their ship and came home into Ireland in safety. Whom their brethren received with great joy, giving thankings to our Lord which had kept them all those seven years from many a peril and brought them home in safety; to whom be given honour and glory, world without end. Amen. And soon after, this holy man S. Brandon waxed feeble and sick, and had but little

joy of this world ; but ever after his joy and mind was in the joys of heaven. And in a short time after he, being full of virtues, departed out of this life to everlasting life ; and was worshipfully buried in a fair abbey which he himself founded, where our Lord showeth for this holy saint many fair miracles.

S. GREGORY THE GREAT

GREGORY is to say in our language as 'awaked,' for he awoke to himself, to God, and to the people; he awoke to himself by keeping of cleanness, to God by good contemplation, and to the people by continual predication. And by this is deserved the vision of God; and S. Austin saith, in the Book of Order, that 'he seeth God that well liveth, well studieth, and well prayeth.'

S. Gregory was born of the parentage of senators of Rome; whose father was named Gordian and his mother Silvia. And when he had so much learned that he was a master in philosophy, and also was rich of patrimony, he thought that he would leave all the riches that he had and would enter into religion for to serve God. But in this that he put this thought in respite he conceived another purpose, that was that him seemed he should better serve God in a secular habit, in doing the office of the pretoria of the provost of Rome, for to give to each man duly reason after the right of his cause. But he found in this office so great secular business that it began to displease him, because by this great business he withdrew him over far from God. In this meanwhile his father and mother died, in such wise that he was so rich of patrimony and puissant, that at the beginning he founded and endowed with rents six abbeys

in Sicily; and the seventh he founded within the walls of Rome in the honour of S. Andrew the apostle, in the which he became a monk. And the remnant of his patrimony he gave for God's sake; so that he that tofore went clothed in clothes of gold and of silk, and adorned with precious stones in the city, when he was monk served in a poor habit the monks. There was at the beginning of his conversation of so perfect a life that it might be said well that he was all perfect. He made great abstinences in eating, in drinking, in waking, and in praying, in so much that he was so travailed that unnethe he might sustain himself. He had put out of his heart all secular things, so that his conversation was in heaven, for he had addressed all his desire for to come to the joy permanable.

On a time it happed that, S. Gregory in his cell of the same abbey whereas he was abbot wrote something, and an angel appeared to him in semblance of a mariner, which seemed as he had escaped from the tempest of the sea, and prayed him weeping to have pity on him. Then S. Gregory commanded that there should be given to him six pence, and then he departed. The same day the angel came again in like wise as he did tofore, and said that he had lost all his good, and prayed him that he would yet help him; on whom S. Gregory had yet pity, and did to be given to him six pence more; yet at the third time he came and made great cry and wept, and prayed him that he would yet help him toward his great loss, so that S. Gregory commanded his provost that he should yet give to this poor man an alms.

And the provost said that there was no more silver in all the abbey, but a dish of silver in which his mother was wont to send him pottage. And S. Gregory commanded anon that that dish of silver should be given to him and the angel took it with great joy. And little while after, this angel appeared to S. Gregory and said to him that God hath sent him so to him.

It happed afterward that as S. Gregory passed through the market of Rome, and saw there two fair children white and ruddy of visage and of fair yellow hair which were for to sell. And S. Gregory demanded from whence they were, and the merchant answered, of England. After S. Gregory demanded if they were christian, and he answered: Nay, but that they were paynims. Then sighed S. Gregory and said: 'Alas, what fair people hath the devil in his doctrine and in his domination!' After, he demanded how these people were called: he answered that they were called Angles-men; then he said: 'they may well be so called, for they have the visage of angels.' And for that S. Gregory went to the pope, and by great prayers he impetred and had grant that he was sent in to England for to convert the people of the same country. But when the Romans heard say that Gregory was sent into England, anon they went to the pope and said to him: 'Thou hast angered S. Peter, thou hast destroyed all Rome, and hurt all holy church in this that thou hast let Gregory go out of Rome.' Of which word the pope was angry and much abashed, and sent anon his messengers after S. Gregory, and commanded

him to return and come again to Rome, which then was gone on his journey three days; and for his noble and good renomee the pope made him cardinal deacon. After, for the corruption of the air, the pope Pelagius died, and then S. Gregory was elect of all the people to be pope, but he refused it and said that to that dignity he was not worthy. And for the right great mortality ere that he was sacred pope he made to the people a sermon and said: 'Right dear brethren, well ought we to have doubt of the scourge of God ere that we feel it, and yet we ought to fear it and to turn and forsake our sins. Lo! ye may behold the people die ere they beweep their sins; think ye then in what point he cometh in the presence of the judge that hath had no time to bewail his sins. The houses be void, the children die in the presence of father and mother suddenly, so that they have little time to die; wherefore every man amend his life while he hath time for to repent him of his evil deeds and sins, ere that the judge call him from the mortal body. He saith by the prophet: 'I will not the death of a sinner, but I will that he return and live; much soon the judge heareth the sinner when he converteth from his sins and amendeth his life.' By such manner admonested he to the people their health, and he ordained to make profession in all the churches much solemnly for to impetre and get mercy for this mortality. When the procession was done he would have gone privily out of Rome, for to eschew the office of the papalty, but against that the gates were kept so that he might not issue. At the last he did do change his habit, and so much

did with the merchants that they brought him out of Rome in a tun upon a cart. And when he was far out of the town he issued out of the tun and hid him in a ditch; and when he had been therein three days the people of Rome sought him all about. Anon they saw a pillar shining descend from heaven straight upon the ditch in which S. Gregory was; and a recluse, a holy man, saw that by that pillar angels descended from heaven to S. Gregory and after went up again. Anon then S. Gregory was taken of the people, and after the ordinance of holy church he was ordained and sacred pope against his will; for he was much debonair, humble and merciful to rich and poor and to great and small. Well may he apperceive that readeth his writings how oft he complained of this great charge that he was charged withal, to which he said he was not worthy thereto; and also he might not hear that any should praise him, ne in letter ne in words. And alway he was in great humility and accounted himself more meek and low after that he was pope than tofore, insomuch that he was the first of the popes that wrote: Servus servorum Dei, that is, servant of the servants of God. He had great cure and was busy to convert sinners; he made and compiled many fair books, of which the church is greatly illumined. He was never idle, how well that he was always sick. He converted the English people to the christian faith by three holy men and good clerks that he sent thither, that is to wit Augustin, Mellitus, and John, for to preach the faith.

And because the mortality ceased not, he ordained

a procession, in the which he did do bear an image of our Lady, which, as is said, S. Luke the Evangelist made, which was a good painter; he had carved it and painted after the likeness of the glorious Virgin Mary. And anon the mortality ceased, and the air became pure and clear, and about the image was heard a voice of angels that sung this anthum: 'Regina cæli lætare, etc.,' and S. Gregory put thereto: 'Ora pro nobis deum, alleluia.' At the same time S. Gregory saw an angel upon a castle which made clean a sword all bloody, and put it into the sheath; and thereby S. Gregory understood that the pestilence of this mortality was passed, and after that it was called the Castle Angel.

S. Gregory did every day so great alms that many in the country about were nourished by him, whom he had by name written, and also the monks that dwelt in the Mount Sinai had of him their sustenance. Among all other alms that he did he governed three thousand virgins, to whom he sent every year four score pound of gold, and also he founded to them an abbey in Jerusalem, and sent to them that therein were such things as they lacked. Every day had he poor men to dinner. On a time it happed that he took the laver for to give water to a pilgrim for to wash his hands by great humility, and anon the pilgrim vanished away, whereof S. Gregory had marvel. The night after our Lord appeared in a vision and said to him: 'The other days thou hast received me in my members, but yesterday thou receivedst me in my person.'

Another day S. Gregory commanded to his dis-

penser that he should bring to dinner twelve poor men; and when S. Gregory and the poor men were set at meat, he told at the table sitting thirteen poor pilgrims, and demanded of his dispenser why he had done above his commandment to bring in more than twelve persons. And anon the dispenser, all abashed, went and told the poor men, and found but twelve, and said to S. Gregory: 'Holy father, there be no more but twelve, and so many shall ye find and no more.' Then considered S. Gregory that, one of the pilgrims that sat next to him oft changed his visage, for oft he seemed young, and after old. And after dinner S. Gregory took him by the hand and brought him into his chamber, and prayed him that he would tell him his name. And he answered: 'Wherefore demandest thou my name, which is marvellous? Nevertheless know thou well that I am the same poor mariner to whom thou gavest the dish of pottage; and know for certain that, sith that day that thou didst to me that alms, God hath destined thee to be pope.' And said moreover: 'I am the angel of God, and he hath sent me hither to thee to be thy defender and procurer of that which thou wouldst demand and impetre of him'; and after this the angel vanished away.

And in that time there was an hermit, an holy man, which had left and forsaken all the goods of the world for God's sake, and had retained nothing but a cat, with which he played oft, and held it in his lap deliciously. On a day it happed that he prayed God devoutly that he would vouchsafe to show to him to what saint he should be in like joy in heaven, because

for his love he had left all the world and renounced. Upon this God showed him in a vision that S. Gregory and he should have like joy in heaven. And when he understood this he sighed sore and praised little his poverty, which he had long suffered and borne, if he should have like merit which abounded so greatly in secular riches. Upon this there came a voice to him which said that: 'The possession of riches maketh not a man in this world rich, but the ardour of covetise: then be still now. Darest thou compare thy poverty to the riches of S. Gregory, which lovest more thy cat, with whom thou ceasest not to stroke and play, than S. Gregory doth all his riches; for he ceaseth never to give alms for God's sake?' Then the hermit thanked Almighty God, and prayed that he might have his merit and reward with S. Gregory in the glory of paradise.

In the time that Trajan the emperor reigned, on a time as he went toward a battle out of Rome, it happed that in his way as he should ride, a woman, a widow, came to him weeping and said: 'I pray thee, sire, that thou avenge the death of one my son which innocently and without cause hath been slain.' The emperor answered: 'If I come again from the battle whole and sound then I shall do justice for the death of thy son.' Then said the widow; 'Sire, and if thou die in the battle who shall then avenge his death?' And the emperor said: 'He that shall come after me.' And the widow said: 'Is it not better that thou do to me justice and have the merit thereof of God than another have it for thee?' Then had Trajan pity and descended from his horse and

did justice in avenging the death of her son. On a time S. Gregory went by the market of Rome which is called the market of Trajan, and then he remembered of the justice and other good deeds of Trajan, and how he had been piteous and debonair, and was much sorrowful that he had been a paynim, and he turned to the church of S. Peter wailing for the horror of the miscreance of Trajan. Then answered a voice from God saying: 'I have now heard thy prayer, and have spared Trajan from the pain perpetual.' By this, as some say, the pain perpetual due to Trajan as a miscreant was somedeal taken away, but for all that was not he quit from the prison of hell; for the soul may well be in hell and feel there no pain, by the mercy of God. And after, it is said that the angel in his answer said more to thus: 'Because thou hast prayed for a paynim, God granteth thee to choose of two things that one which thou wilt; or thou shalt be two days in purgatory in pain, or else all the days of thy life thou shalt languish in sickness.' Then answered S. Gregory that he had liefer to have sickness all his life in this world, than to feel by two days the pains of purgatory. And ever after he had continually the fevers, or axes, or the gout in his feet, and hereof himself maketh mention in one his epistle, and saith: 'I am so much tormented of the gout in my feet and of other sicknesses that my life is to me a great pain; every day meseemeth that I ought to die, and always I abide the death. Some time my pain is little, and some time right great, but it is not so little that it departeth from me, ne so great that it bringeth me to

death; and thus it is that I, that am always ready to die, am withdrawn from death.' It happed that a widow, that was wont every Sunday to bring hosts to sing mass with, should on a time be houseled and communed; and when S. Gregory should give to her the holy sacrament in saying: 'Corpus domini nostri, etc.,' that is to say: 'The body of our Lord Jesu Christ keep thee into everlasting life,' anon this woman began to smile wantonly tofore S. Gregory, and anon he withdrew his hand and remised the sacrament upon the altar. And he demanded her, tofore the people, why she smiled, and she said: 'Because that the bread that I have made with my proper hands thou namest it the body of our Lord Jesu Christ.' Anon S. Gregory put himself to prayer with the people, for to pray to God that hereupon he would show his grace for to confirm our belief; and when they were risen from prayer S. Gregory saw the holy sacrament in figure of a piece of flesh as great as the little finger of an hand, and anon after, by the prayers of S. Gregory, the flesh of the sacrament turned into semblance of bread as it had been tofore, and therewith he communed and houseled the woman, which after was more religious, and the people more firm in the faith.

S. Gregory made and ordained the song of the office of holy church; and established at Rome two schools of song, that one beside the church of S. Peter, and that other by the church of S. John Lateran, where the place is yet where he lay and taught the scholars; and the rod with which he menaced them and the antiphoner on which he learned them is

yet there. He put to the canon of the Mass these words: 'Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab æterna damnatione nos eripi et in electorum tuorum jubeas grege numerari.' At the last when S. Gregory had been pope thirteen years, six months and ten days, he being full of good works, departed out of this world in the year of our Lord six hundred and six years, in the time when Phocas was emperor of Rome. Let us then pray to S. Gregory that he get us grace that we may amend so ourselves here in this life that we may come unto everlasting life in heaven. Amen.

S. WINIFRED

AFTER that the holy man Beuno had do make many churches, and had ordained the service of God devoutly to be said in them, he came to a place of a worshipful man named Teuythe, the which was the son of a noble senator called Eliude, and desired that he would give to him as much ground as he might build a church on in the honour of God. Then he granted him his asking with good will, and then did do build thereon a fair church, to the which this worshipful man, his wife and his daughter Winifred, resorted daily for to hear therein divine service. And then Winifred was set to school to this holy man Beuno, and he taught her full diligently and informed her perfectly in the faith of Jesu Christ. And this holy maid Winifred gave credence to his words, and was so inflamed with his holy doctrine that she purposed to forsake all worldly pleasances and to serve Almighty God in meekness and in chastity. And then it fortuned upon a Sunday she was diseased, and she abode at home and kept her father's house while they were at church. To whom there came a young man who was named Cradok, the son of a king named Alane; which young man burned in the concupiscence of her by the enticing or the fiend, which had envy at this holy virgin, Winifred. And she demanded the

cause of his coming. And when she understood his corrupt intent, she excused her and put him off all she might. And he, alway abiding in his foul purpose, would in no wise be answered. Then she feigned her as she would have consented, and said she would go into her chamber for to array herself for to please him the better. And when he had agreed to her, she closed fast the chamber door, and fled privily by another door toward the church. And when this young man had espied her, he followed her with his sword drawn like a wood man, and when he had overtaken her he said to her these words: 'Sometime I loved thee and desired to have thee to my wife, but one thing tell now to me shortly—either consent to me to accomplish my pleasure or else I shall slay thee with this sword.' Then this blessed virgin Winifred thought firmly that she would not forsake the son of the everlasting king for to please the son of a temporal king, and said to him in this manner: 'I will in no wise consent to thy foul and corrupt desire, for I am joined to my spouse Jesu Christ which preserveth and keepeth my virginity. And trust thou verily, that I will not forsake him for all thy menaces and threatenings.' And when she had said thus, this cursed tyrant full of malice smote off her head. And in the same place whereas the head fell to the ground, there sprang up a fair well giving out abundantly fair clear water, where our Lord God yet daily showeth many miracles. And many sick people having divers diseases have been cured and healed by the merits of this blessed virgin, S. Winifred. And in

the said well appear yet stones besprinkled and speckled as it were with blood, which cannot be had away by no means, and the moss that groweth on these stones is of a marvellous sweet odour, and that endureth unto this day.

And when the father and mother knew of their daughter, they made great lamentation for her death because they had no more children but her only.

And when this holy man Beuno understood the death of Winifred, and saw the heaviness of her father and mother, he comforted them goodly, and brought them to the place whereas she lay dead. And there he made a sermon to the people, declaring her virginity, and how she had avowed to be a religious woman. And after, took up the head in his hands, and set it to the place where it was cut off, and desired all the people that were there present to kneel down and pray devoutly to Almighty God that it might please him to raise her again unto life, and not only for the comfort of father and mother, but for to accomplish the vow of religion. And when they arose from prayer, this holy virgin arose with them also; made by a miracle alive again by the power of Almighty God. Wherefore all the people gave laud and praising unto his holy name for this great miracle. And ever, as long as she lived after, there appeared about her neck a redness round about, like to a red thread of silk, in sign and token of her martyrdom.

And this young man that had thus slain her had wiped his sword on the grass, and stood still there beside, and had no power to remove away, ne to

repent him of that cursed deed. And then this holy man Beuno, reproved him, not only of the homicide, but also because he reverenced not the Sunday and dreaded not the great power of God there showed upon this holy virgin, and said to him: 'Why hast thou no contrition for thy misdeed? But sith thou repentest not, I beseech Almighty God to reward thee after thy deserving.' And then he fell down dead to the ground, and his body was all black, and suddenly borne away with fiends.

Then after, this holy maid Winifred was veiled and consecrate into religion by the hands of this holy man Beuno. And he commanded her to abide in the same church that he had do make there by the space of seven years, and there to assemble to her virgins of honest and holy conversation whom she should inform in the laws of God. And after the seven years to go to some holy place of religion, and there to abide the residue of her life. And when this holy man should depart from her and go into Ireland, she followed him, till she came to the foresaid well, where they stood talking a long while of heavenly things. And when they should depart, this holy man said: 'It is the will of our Lord that thou send to me every year some token, which thou shalt put into the stream of this well, and from hence it shall by the stream be brought into the sea, and so by the purveyance of God it shall be brought over the sea the space of fifty miles, to the place where I shall dwell.' And after they were departed, she with her virgins made a chasuble of silk work, and the next year following she wrapt it in a white

mantle and laid it upon the stream of the said well, and from thence it was brought unto this holy man Beuno, through the waves of the sea, by the purveyance of God. After this, the blessed virgin Winifred increased from day to day in great virtue and goodness, and specially in holy contemplation with her sisters, moving them into great devotion and love of Almighty God. And when she had abode there seven years, she departed thence and went to the monastery called Wytheriacus, in which were both men and women of virtuous and holy conversation. And when she had confessed and told her life unto the holy abbot Elerius, he received her honourably and brought her to his mother, Theonia, a blessed woman which had the rule and charge of all the sisters of that place; and when Theonia was deceased out of this world, this holy abbot Elerius delivered to this holy virgin Winifred the charge of the sisters; but she refused it as long as she might. But by constraint she took the charge, and lived afterward a virtuous life and more straiter and harder than she did tofore in giving good ensample to all her sisters. And when she had continued there in the service of God eight years, she yielded up her spirit to her maker, to whom let us pray to be a special intercessor for us. Amen.

S. EDWARD

In old time the realm of England was greatly troubled with the Danes, so that in many kings' days there could no peace be made, but continually war. And the Danes prevailed against England, and they brought it under their subjection, for their cruelty and tyranny was so great that, without sparing of anything, they burnt and destroyed. But at the last it pleased Almighty God that this tyranny should cease, and sent of his grace unto this realm of England a peaceable king named Edgar, in whose birth angels sang that peace should be in his time, and so in his days was no war in England. S. Edward, king and martyr, his son, reigned not long after him, for his stepmother did do slay him in his young age, because her son Ethelred should reign, and S. Dunstan baptized Ethelred, and said because he defiled the fontstone that he should live in great trouble, and so he did, for the Danes warred all his time. And this Ethelred wedded Earl Godwin's daughter, on whom he gat Edmond Ironside. And after the death of that queen, he wedded the daughter of Richard, duke of Normandy, which hight Emma, by whom he had two sons, Alfred and Edward, which was a saint and confessor, of whom we purpose to speak. When king Ethelred was fallen in age, he made a parliament which of his two

sons should be kings after him. And then by the provision of God it was concluded that Edward, which was not then born, should be king, and excluded Edmond Ironside and Alfred, which were the king's older sons. And when the king had consented thereto, a general oath was made to perform the same in time coming. And after, when this child was born, all the land enjoyed in his birth, hoping to be greatly relieved by him. Yet always the cruelty of the Danes was so great, which the king so much doubted, that he sent the queen and his two sons Alfred and Edward into Normandy, and took his oldest son Edmond with him to battle, to fight against the Danes. The sorrow was then great in England, for much people turned to the Danes against their own king, and without pity did burn and slay their own country with the Danes, among whom was slain Alphage archbishop of Canterbury at Greenwich, and many other good men. And some bishops, priests, and men of religion fled into secret places and deserts, where they devoutly prayed unto Almightly God for to have very peace in this land; but this war continued all the life of Ethelred, according to the prophecy of S. Dunstan.

And after Ethelred reigned Edmond Ironside his son, in full great trouble, for in his days no man durst trust other, ne open his courage to his neighbour, for that time each man appeached other of treason, to the intent that he might have his good. And they that were not of power to overcome their neighbours turned unto the Danes against their own neighbours, and so, by the help of the Danes, they

fulfilled their cursed purpose, and so there was much extortion, and much people slain in divers places, in houses, fields and ways, that the people unnethe durst bury them. Also in that time was great tyranny, murder, oppressing of women, as wives, widows, and maidens, against their wills. And in this persecution Englishmen were nigh destroyed, and great desolation was in holy church, for monasteries, churches, and houses of religion were burnt and destroyed; which caused many to flee into wilderness, among whom the good bishop of Winchester, Brightwold, fled into the abbey of Glastonbury, where he daily prayed unto Almighty God for peace of this realm of England.

Our blessed Lord, seeing his meekness, showed to him a vision by which he was greatly comforted. For in a night, as he was in his oratory, he fell in a sweet slumber, and saw the glorious apostle S. Peter with bright shining clothes appearing in a high place of dignity, and with him a seemly young man richly arrayed in clothing of a king, whom S. Peter did consecrate and anoint into a king, and commending his chastity greatly and his clean living. And it was showed to this bishop many years tofore, that this Edward should reign in this land, and the bishop, being abashed of this vision, desired of S. Peter to know the vision thereof, to whom S. Peter said the estate of this realm, and told that the fury and woodness of the Danes should cease soon after, and said that all this punishment was for the sins of the people, and God should purvey for a peaceable king which shall finish all the woodness of his enemies the

Danes. 'In whose time shall be plenty of peace, both to the church and to the land, and great abundance of corn and fruit. And this realm shall be prosperous in all things, and the people shall be of such conditions that other lands shall both love and dread them. The king's name shall be Edward, which shall rule all manner things to the pleasing of God, and shall end his life in the love of our Lord graciously.' And when this holy bishop awoke, he kneeled down and made his prayers with shedding of tears, and thought that peace was not yet reformed, nevertheless he thanked Almighty God that he was certain that, by God's grace, he should see it in his days; wherefore he went about and preached to the people for to do penance, and our Lord should show to us mercy, and give to us peace and all things plenteous. And in this war was the king slain by treason, and he was buried at Glastonbury. Then both his sons were brought to King Canute the Dane, to do with them what he would, and when he saw them he might not for pity slay them, but sent them over the sea to be slain there, so that he might reign in England peaceably when the rightful blood was destroyed. Notwithstanding, they were preserved and kept alive, and were conveyed to the emperor of Rome, the which kept them till S. Edward was made king of England; and then he married the oldest of them to a cousin of his, because of the love that they had to King Edward, which was uncle to them. Then had King Canute the rule of England by strong hand, all law and good rule set aside. For in his days was full much trouble and

robbery with other great oppressions and importable charges among the commonalty. For he dreaded no man except the two sons of the king, that were then with the emperor, wherefor his council would that he should wed the mother of them named Emma, to make the more alliance between them. And soon after, Alfred came to England for to speak with his mother, and anon as he was come over the sea into this land Earl Godwin came and welcomed him, and anon after slew him by treason, ere he came to the presence of his mother. For whose death S. Edward made great sorrow. And while this holy child S. Edward was in Normandy, he used a full good life, haunting ofttimes holy church, and loved and conversed many times with the company of holy religious men, and especially among holy monks. And used to pray and say in this manner: 'O good Lord, I have none help but thee only, my friends be gone from me, and they become mine adversaries. My father is dead and my brethren be slain, my mother is wedded to my most enemy, and I am left alone, and daily they seek the means to slay me; but to thee, Lord, I am left poor. I besecch thee, Lord, to help me that am a fatherless child, for thou sometime helpedst marvellously Edwin and Oswald, which were exiled and ordained for to die. Thou defendedst them not only from death, but also thou, Lord, restoredst them again to their own kingdoms. O good Lord, I beseech thee and pray thee to keep me safe, and bring me into the kingdom of my father. Thou shalt be my God, and S. Peter the apostle my patron, the relics of whom, by the grace

of God, I purpose to visit and to honour in the same place where they now rest, if thou, Lord, send to me life, health, opportunity and space.'

And when King Canute had reigned in England twenty years, having two sons by the said Emma, that is to wit, Harold and Hardicanute, he died, and when his first son had reigned four years, he exiled his own mother, and died soon after. And after him reigned his brother a little time, and died also, as our Lord had ordained, and then was England delivered from the grievous tribute and thraldom of the Danes. And then the lords and the commons of England remembered the oath that they made in the parliament, which sware that Edward, which was then in his mother's womb, should be their king, and anon sent into Normandy for this holy child Edward. And the lords and the commons received him with great gladness, and then the archbishop of Canterbury and the archbishop of York, with other bishops, did consecrate him, anointed and crowned him king of England.

O good Lord! what joy and gladness was then in England. For when the old felicity of this land was almost despaired, then it was kindled again by the coming of this blessed king S. Edward. Then had the commons rest and peace, and the lords and gentlemen rest and honour, and then holy church received all her liberties again. Then was the sun lifted up and the moon set in his order, that is to say, priests shined in wisdom and in holiness. The monasteries flourished in devotion by holy religion. The clerks gave light and prospered in their offices

to the pleasure of God. The common people were content and were joyful in their degree, and in this king's days there was no venom that might then corrupt the earth with pestilence, and in the sea none outrageous tempests, and the land plenteous of all manner of fruits; and in the clergy nothing inordinate; and among the common people was no grudging. And the renomee and fame of this holy king S. Edward sprang so marvellously about to other nations, in such wise that all christian kings desired to have peace with him. The king of France, which was nigh of his kin, made with him a general peace, so that it might be said of him as it was said of Solomon: 'All the kings of the earth desired to see his face, and to hear his wisdom'; except only Denmark, which yet conspired against this realm of England. And what fell thereof, it shall be declared hereafter more openly; for this holy king Edward was ever full of meekness and of virtue, and never lifted up by vain glory, but ever he remembered the words of our Lord that saith: 'I have set thee prince of the people, but be not therefore lifted up in vain glory, but be thou among them as one of them.'

He was among his household men equal and familiar, among priests meek and debonair, to his people amiable and cheerful, to wretches and needy men full of compassion and large of almsgiving. He was also much devout in the service of God, and diligent to repair and re-edify churches that were destroyed by the Danes. And in judgment full discreet, considering no man's person, but only the weight of his cause, as well to the rich as to the poor;

and he had riches enough, and his treasure seemed common to all poor men. His words were sad and discreet and meddled with mirth, speaking oft of Jesu Christ the second person in the Trinity, and of our blessed Lady his mother. And sometime he spake sharply, as he saw need, correcting trespassers; gentle and sweet to good men. He was never elate, ne enhanced in pride, ne dishonest by gluttony. He would not be compelled by wrath, ne incline for gift.

He despised riches, and was never sorry for loss of worldly goods and riches, ne the more glad for winning thereof, in such wise that all men marvelled of the sadness of him. And about the king were divers covetous men, which said to the king how his treasure wasted fast, and if the Danes came again he had not wherewith to defend him. Wherefore they counselled him to raise an aid among the commons, like as King Canute had done divers times. An aid was then, yclept the danegeld, and they counselled to do in like wise. And he said: 'Nay,' and he would not agree thereto, notwithstanding they daily cried upon him. And when he saw them so importunate and showed great perils, then at the last he said to them to prove them: 'Let us see how ye will do.' And when they heard that of his own mouth they were right glad, and sent out commissions for to gather it, and spared no country, but made them pay in the largest wise. And when this money was levied and brought in to the king's treasury, then they brought the king thither for to see it. The king then standing afar from it, saw the devil in like-

ness of an ape, sitting upon the treasure, and said: 'What have ye done? and what money have ye brought to me? Forsooth, there shall not one penny be spent to my use, but I charge you for to deliver to each man his money again.' But thereto they were much loth, and said that they might spend it in deeds of charity. Then the king said: 'God forbid that I should spend the goods of other men; for what alms should I make with the goods of poor commons and labourers? See ye not how the devil sitteth upon the heap of money, and maketh great joy that he hath taken us in his snare? Wherefore I charge you on pain of death that ye deliver this money again there as ye had it, every penny.' Then they obeyed the king, and repaid it unto them of whom they had received it, and durst never after move the king to such matters, ne in none other like, so that all the days of S. Edward was neither task ne taillage levied among his commons, which was a great joy to the realm.

In a time the king was sick, lying in his bed, and there stood in his chamber a chest open, full of gold and silver, and a clerk came in, supposing the king had slept, and took out of it a certain sum of money, and went his way. And soon after he came again and would have taken more; then the king said: 'Forsooth, now thou art unwise to come again, for thou hadst sufficiently enough tofore; therefore beware, for if the treasurer come and find thee thou art like to die therefor; wherefore if thou love thy life flee fast away with that thou hast.' And anon after came the treasurer and found how of the treasure

was borne away a great part, and sought and enquired diligently for the thief that stole it. And the king seeing the great trouble and sorrow of the treasurer demanded him the cause of his heaviness. And when he had told it to the king, the king said to him: 'Sorrow no more, for peradventure he that hath it hath more need to it than we'; and so the thief escaped and was not pursued.

After, when all things were quiet in the realm, the council of the land assembled for to treat for a marriage for the king, at which thing, when it was moved, he was greatly abashed, dreading to lose the treasure of his virginity, which was kept in a frail and brittle vessel; and what he should do or say he wist not. For, if he should obstinately deny it, he dreaded lest his vow of chastity should be openly known, and if he consented thereto he dreaded to lose his chastity, wherefore he commended himself only to God, saying these words: 'O good Lord, thou deliveredst sometime three children from the flame of fire in the chimney and furnace of the Chaldees; and, by the Lord, Joseph escaped with his chastity from the wife of Potiphar, she holding his mantle, and yet by thy mercy he escaped; and, good Lord, by thy virtue Susanna was delivered from the death to the which the old unchaste priests had damned her to; and by thy might, Lord, Judith escaped when she had slain Holofernes and reserved her from defouling and escaped without hurt; and above all other thou hast preserved thy blessed mother, most best and sweetest lady, she being both wife and virgin; then behold on me thy servant and

son of thine handmaid, that I am in great dread. I lift up my heart to thee, beseeching thee that art my Lord, and thy mother, my sweetest Lady, to help me now in this most need, that I may so receive the sacrament of wedlock that I fall not in peril of my chastity.' And with this condition in his heart, he consented to matrimony.

Then was all the council right glad, and searched for a virgin that were according to his estate. And among all the virgins of the land Edith, daughter of Earl Godwin, was found most according to him by her virtuous conditions. And her father made great means to the king's council for to accomplish this marriage, by which he might come in the king's conceit. And by his wisdom, for his great might and power, he had his intent. And when the marriage was solemnised and accomplished by the holy sacrament, he and the queen vowed to live together chaste secretly, that no man knew it but God alone. Afterward, some of the realm grudged, saying he had taken a wife by compulsion against his will of an unkind lineage, and would not know his wife because he would not bring forth more tyrants. And thus none knew the very truth of his chaste life whilst he lived, but the very cleanness of his mind was sffiucient witness of his chastity.

It happened on a Whitsunday, as the king was crowned at Westminster in his estate, and kneeling, made his prayers devoutly for the tranquillity and peace of his land before the alter of the blessed Trinity, at the elevation of the blessed sacrament he fell in a soft and demure laughing, so that the lords

that were there present awaiting on him marvelled greatly, but durst say nothing to him till the service was done. Then one, that was hardier than another, demanded of him the cause of his laughing, and then he told to him how the Danes had assembled in great power of people against the realm of England, and were entering into their ships; and as the king of Denmark would have entered into the ship, suddenly his strength was taken from him, and so fell into the sea between two ships and was drowned, by whose death the people of Denmark, and also of England, were delivered from sin and peril. They, hearing this, marvelled greatly, and sent into Denmark to know the truth. And when the messengers returned, they reported that it was true as the king had said, and that the king of Denmark was drowned that same time that S. Edward laughed.

After this, the noble S. Edward remembered his vow and promise to visit S. Peter at Rome, which he made in Normandy; wherefore he let call his commons and his lords to a council tofore him, whereof he communed with them how and in what manner he might depart, and of the governance of the realm in his absence, what people should be convenient for to accompany him, and what money should suffice him and his meiny. And when the lords and commons heard this, they were full heavy and sorrowful that he should depart from them, and he seeing their heaviness comforted them, and said how that our Lord had sent to them peace, and by his good grace should continue the same in his absence. Yet, notwithstanding, the people required

him to send unto the pope to be assoiled of his vow, or else delay it till another time. And the king, seeing the sorrow and lamentation of his people, which wept and wrung their hands, and as people amazed without a defender and keeper, comforted them and granted to abide still with them, and ordained certain bishops for to go to Rome and to ask of our holy father counsel, how he might be assoiled of this avow that he had made to visit S. Peter. And the archbishop of York, and bishop of Winchester, and two abbots, with divers clerks and laymen, went to Rome; and when they came to Rome, the pope had made that time a great congregation of clerks of divers great matters belonging to holy church, and when the pope wist of their coming, he was right glad and sent for them, and the pope bade them tell the cause of their coming. And anon, silence was made, and they exposed the cause of their coming, and recited the avow and the desire of King Edward, the peril of the realm, the trouble, the dread of the people, the breaking of the peace, the clamour of the poor commons, the jeopardy of the king in his absence, and the piteous destruction which the Danes had late made by their cruelty; and also declared the great devotion he had to visit the holy apostles Peter and Paul. Then the pope and the clergy marvelled greatly, and gave laud and praising unto Almighty God that he had sent so devout and virtuous a prince in the angle of the world to maintain by his wisdom the christian faith, and how dreadful he was to offend against the holy church. And when the pope understood how his people loved

him and how sorrowful they would be of his departing, he marvelled greatly, and thought verily that he was greatly beloved of God and was with him in all his works, for he saw in him the meekness of David, the chastity of Joseph, and the riches of Solomon, and yet he set nought thereby. Then the pope, considering the great perils that might ensue by his departing, dispensed with him, and assoiled him of his avow, of which he sent to him a bull under lead, and enjoyned him in penance to give the goods that he should have spent in his pilgrimage to deeds of charity, and to re-edify some church of S. Peter and endow it with sufficient livelihood. And then the messengers received the pope's blessing, and returned into England and came unto the king at Westminster. And when the king understood how he was assoiled of his avow and how they had sped, he was glad, and thanked Almighty God and our holy father the pope.

There was a holy man, a recluse in the diocese of Worcester, which knew nothing of the council assembled upon the governance of the land, ne of the avow of the king, ne of the message sent to Rome; to whom S. Peter appeared in a night, and said to him how King Edward had sent to Rome to be assoiled of the avow that he made when he was beyond the sea; 'and he hath great conscience because his counsel would not suffer him to accompany it in going in his proper person to Rome; wherefore thou shalt write to him in my name and give him knowledge that he is assoiled by mine authority from the bond of his avow, and how he shall have, in com-

mandment of the pope for his penance, to give such goods as he hath ordained for his expenses, to poor men, and to make a new abbey in the honour of S. Peter, or to repair an old one, and to endow it sufficiently, and write to him that, by the same token that he chose me sometime to be his patron in Normandy, that he repair the abbey called Thorney in the west side of the city of London, which sometime I hallowed myself. And let him set therein monks of good conversation: for from that place shall be a ladder stretching in to heaven, and angels descending and ascending, bearing up to heaven to our Lord the prayers of wise and devout men. And to him that ascendeth by that ladder, I shall open the gates of heaven, like as our Lord hath enjoined me by mine office, and I shall loose them that be bound, and receive them that be unbound. All this that thou hast heard of me, thou shalt write it and send it to King Edward,' which then was many a mile thence. And the messenger that came from this anker or recluse came to the presence of the king the same time that the bishops came from Rome. And when the king had received the letters that came from Rome with great reverence and read them, he thanked God that he was so clearly released of the bond of his avow. And then he commanded the letters of the recluse to be read. And when they were read, and he saw they were according to the letters that came from Rome, he humbly thanked God and S. Peter his patron, and incontinent disposed him to fulfil his penance, and began to repair the abbey that he was assigned to repair by the

glorious apostle S. Peter, and gave largely alms to poor people, and franchised all England of the tribute that was used yearly to be paid to the Danes for evermore.

On a time when King Edward was at Westminster, there came to him a cripple, born in Ireland, which was named Giles Michell. And this cripple had no feet, but went upon his hands and knees, having in either hand a little stool to go with. His legs were both bent backward and cleaved to his thighs, and his toes grew fast to his buttocks. This cripple entered boldly into the king's palace, and came to the king's chamber door. And one Hulin, the king's chamberlain, demanded him sharply what he did there. To whom the cripple said: 'Let me not, I pray you; for I must needs speak to the king; for I have been out of this land six times to visit the holy relics of the holy apostle S. Peter, to the intent to be healed, and S. Peter denied me not, but bade me go into England and let the king bear me on his back into the church of S. Peter, and then I shall be made perfectly whole.' Which thing was told to the king by the same Hulin, and anon the king had pity on the poor man, and disdained not, but took him on his shoulders and bare him, whom the cripple beclipped with his foul and scabby hands and arms, and so, in the bearing, his sinews loosed and were reached out. And of kernels and botches of his face, and of scurvies, there ran great plenty of blood and matter on the king's clothes, which was told to the king, and also that he was all whole; but the king took none heed thereto, but bare him to the high

altar, and there he was set down on his feet, and was made perfectly whole to ride or go whither he would. But the king would in no wise have this miracle ascribed to him; but gave to him a reward and bade him to go to Rome and thank God and his holy apostle S. Peter.

In old time King Ethelbert, which reigned in Kent, and Sigbert in Middlesex, were converted to the faith of Christ by S. Austin. Which Ethelbert made in London, within the city, a noble and royal church in the honour of S. Paul, in which S. Austin ordained S. Mellitus to be bishop of that city. Which king was not satisfied with that good deed, but thought and also did do make another church in the west end of the city, which then was called Thorney, and now is named Westminster, which church he prayed Mellitus for to hallow in the honour of S. Peter. And the night before that he had purposed to hallow it, S. Peter appeared to a fisher in Thames, and bade him set him over from Stangate to Westminster, and he prayed the fisher to abide him there till he came again, and he would well reward him for his labour. And soon after the fisher saw S. Peter enter into the church with a great light, which light endured as long as he was in the church. And a certain space after, he returned to the fisher asking him if he had any meat to eat, and the fisher was so greatly abashed of the light that issued out of the church with him, that he durst not speak to him. To whom S. Peter said: 'Brother, dread thee not, I am a man as thou art; hast thou any fish?' And he said: 'Nay, for I have awaited on you all this night while ye have

been in the church.' And then they entered into the boat, and S. Peter commanded him to cast out his net. And when he had so done, there came so great a multitude of great fishes into his net, that unnethe they might draw up the net for breaking. And when they were come to land S. Peter divided the fishes, and bade the fisher bear the greatest unto Mellitus, bishop of London, and deliver it to him, 'and tell to him that I have hallowed the church of Westminster this night; and say to him that he say mass therein to-morrow; and if he will not believe it, say to him, when he cometh he shall find there tokens sufficient; and I shall be patron of that church, and visit it oft-times, and bear in the sight of Almighty God the prayers and devotions of true christian people that pray in that place. And take thou the remnant of the fish for thy labour.' And this said, S. Peter vanished away. Then the fisher marvelled greatly of the sight that he had seen, and early by the morrow he went to the bishop Mellitus, of London, and delivered to him the fish that S. Peter had sent to him, and told to him, by order, like as S. Peter had given him charge, and as ye have heard tofore. But the bishop would not believe him till he came to Westminster and saw the tokens for to put him out of doubt. And when he had opened the church door he found a cross made of sand from that one side of the church unto that other, with a. b. c. letters of grewe, and he found also twelve crosses made on the walls in divers places of the church, and the ends of twelve candles almost burnt out, and also he saw the places that were anointed with holy oil, which were

yet moist and appeared newly done. Then the bishop believed this thing verily, and said mass that same day in the church, and there preached to the people a glorious sermon, and declared the great miracle openly. Wherefore the people gave laud and praisings to God and to his glorious apostle S. Peter.

And then S. Edward understood that this church was of old time hallowed by S. Peter, and how S. Peter had commanded him to repair the same church, as the letter of the recluse maketh mention. So then ever after he had full great devotion to the same place. And he did do cast down the old work, and did do build it up new, and endowed that monastery worshipfully with livelihood and jewels.

On a time when the king was in the church of S. Peter at Westminster, and was disposed in great devotion, as his custom was, to hear mass, Earl Leofric kneeled behind the king and saw with his bodily eyes our Lord Jesu Christ between the priest's hands, appearing in the likeness of a glorious child or beauteous person which blessed the king with his right hand. And the king, which was greatly comforted with the sight, bowed down his head, and with great devotion and meekness received the blessing of our Lord. Then the earl arose to tell the king, supposing that the king had not seen it, but he knew the earl's intent and bade him stand still, 'for that thou seest I see, and him I honour.' And when mass was done they talked together of their vision, and they were marvellously refreshed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and might not well speak for joy

and weeping. Then the king commanded Leofric that this vision should never be uttered ne openly known till the time that they should die. And when Leofric should depart hence, he told it in confession to his ghostly father, and made it to be written, and that writing was laid in a chest among other relics. And many years after, when they were both dead, the writing was found and read. And then the holiness of the king was known, and his meekness showed, which would not it should be showed by their life for vain glory.

S. Paul writeth that the Holy Ghost giveth graces diversely; to some he giveth wisdom, to some conning, and to some grace to heal and to cure sick people. But this blessed king S. Edward had a special grace above others in giving sight to blind men. There was a blind man well known, which heard a voice in his sleep, that if he might have of the water that the king washed his hands in, and wash his eyes therewith, he should have his sight again. Then the next day after, this blind man went in to the king's palace, and told his vision to the king's chamberlain, and the chamberlain told it to the king. Then the king said that it might be well an illusion or a dream which is not always true. for it hath not been seen that foul water of a sinner's hands should give sight to blind men. Then said the chamberlain that many times dreams have been found true, as the dreams of Joseph, Pharaoh, Daniel, and many others. Then the king in great humility went into the church on a solemn day with a basin of water, and commanded the blind man to be

brought to him. And as the king washed the face of the blind man, his eyes were opened and he had his sight, and stood all abashed looking on the people, as he had newly come into this world. And then the people wept for joy to see the holiness of the king. And then he was demanded if he might see clearly, and he said: 'Yea, forsooth'; and the king kneeled down before the altar saying this verse with great dread and meekness: 'Non nobis domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam,' that is to say: 'Not to us, Lord, not to us, but unto thy name be given glory.'

After this, the holiness and fame of S. Edward sprang about so that, a citizen of Lincoln, which had been blind three years, came to the king's palace to have of the water that the king had washed his hands in, for he believed that it would heal him. And as he had gotten of that water by one of the king's officers, he washed his face and eyes therewith, and anon he was restored to his sight and was perfectly made whole, and so joyfully returned home, magnifying God and S. Edward that he had his sight again.

In a time there were gathered together certain workmen to hew down trees to the king's palace at Bruham. And after their labour, they laid them down to sleep in the shadow, and a young man of that fellowship that hight Wilwin, when he should rise, he opened his eyes and might not see. He washed his face and rubbed his eyes, but he might nothing see, wherefore he was full of heaviness. Then one of his fellows led him home to his house

and he abode so blind eighteen years. And at the last, a worshipful woman came to visit and comfort him. And when she knew how he was made blind, she bade him be of good cheer, and said if he would visit sixty churches with good devotion, and then to have the water that the king had washed his hands in and wash his eyes withal, he should have his sight again. Then he was greatly comforted, and gat him a guide, and went and visited three score churches with great devotion, and came to the king's palace and cried for help, and they that heard him bade him cease of his crying, but for all that he cried more and more. And when the king understood it, he called him to him and said: 'Why should I not set my hands to help this poor man, though I be unworthy, if it please God to relieve him and to give to him his sight?' And because he would not be found disobedient to God ne presumptuous, he took water and washed his eyes full meekly, and anon he was restored to his sight, and saw as clearly as ever he did.

As the king on a time sat at the table with the queen and her father Earl Godwin, and saw how Harold and Tosti, the two sons of Godwin, played tofore the king; but at the last the game turned into earnest, and they began to fight. And Harold took his brother by the hair, and threw him to the earth and fell upon him in great anger, and would have strangled him but if he had been let. Then the king demanded Godwin if he understood anything thereby, and he said: 'Nay, forsooth.' Then the king said: 'Ye shall see when they come to

man's age that, one of them shall slay that other if he can. And Harold, which is the stronger, shall put that other out of his land. Then shall his brother Tosti come again with the king of Norway, and hold a battle against Harold his brother in England, in the which both the king of Norway and Tosti shall be slain, and all their host save a few that shall escape. And the same Harold shall give himself to penance for the death of his brother and so escape, or else he shall be put out of his kingdom and die wretchedly.'

The king was many time moved and displeased with Godwin, for he misused the king's power, and attempted the king in many things that were unlawful. And in all that he might, he laboured to bring out of conceit the king's cousins and friends that came to him out of Normandy, to the intent that he might have all the rule about the king as well secretly as outward. And the king, understanding his falseness, said but little. But in a time, as the king sat at his dinner with divers lords and gentles about him, one of his servants was almost overthrown as he smote that one foot with that other, and yet the sadder foot saved all, and kept him on his feet; which thing gave occasion to the king to talk to his lords, and the two feet were likened to two brethren, that if one were overcharged that other should help and succour him. Then said the king: 'So might my brother have been a help to me, and a supporter in time of need, if he had not been betrayed of Godwin.' Then Godwin, hearing these words of the king's mouth, was sore afeard,

and said: 'Sire, ye deem that I should betray your brother? I pray God that this morsel of bread may choke me if I consented to his death.' Then the king blessed the bread, and bade him eat it, and the morsel abode in his throat and choked him, so that his breath was stopped, and so died wretchedly. Then the king said: 'Draw the traitor out of my presence, for now his treason and falsehood appeareth.'

On Easter-day when he had received our Lord, and was set at his dinner, in the middle of it, when all was silence, he fell into a smiling, and after into a sadness, wherefore all that were there marvelled greatly, but none durst ask of him what he meant. But after dinner duke Harold followed him into his chamber with a bishop and an abbot that were of his privy council, and demanded of him the cause of that thing. Then the king said: 'When I remembered at my dinner the great benefits of worship and dignity of meats, of drinks, of servants, of array, and of all riches and royalty that I stood in at that time, and I referred all that worship to Almighty God, as my custom is, then our Lord opened mine eyen, and I saw the seven sleepers lying in a cave in the Mount Celion beside the city of Ephesus, in the same form and manner as though I had been by them. And I smiled when I saw them turn them from the right side to the left side, but when I understood what is signified by the said turning, I had no cause to laugh but rather to mourn. The turning signifieth that the prophecy be fulfilled that saith: Surget gens contra gentem, that is to say,

people shall arise against people, and a kingdom against another. They have lain many years upon their right side, and they shall lie yet on their left side seventy years, in which times will be great battles, great pestilence, and great murrain, great earthquakes, great hunger and great dearth through all the world.' Of which saying of the king they greatly marvelled, and anon they sent to the emperor to know if there were any such city or hill in his land in which such seven men should sleep. Then the emperor, marvelling, sent to the same hill and there found the cave and the seven martyrs sleeping as they had been dead, lying on the left side every one. And then the emperor was greatly abashed of that sight, and commended greatly the holiness of S. Edward, the king of England, which had the spirit of prophecy. For after his death began great insurrections through all the world. For the paynims destroyed a great part of Syria, and threw down both monasteries and churches, and what by pestilence and stroke of sword, streets, fields, and towns lay full of dead men. The prince of Greece was slain, the emperor of Rome was slain, the king of England and the king of France were slain, and all the other realms of the world were greatly troubled with divers diseases.

When the blessed King Edward had lived many years, and was fallen into great age, it happed he came riding by a church in Essex called Havering, which was at that time in hallowing and should be dedicated in the honour of our Lord and S. John the Evangelist; wherefore the king for great devotion

lighted down and tarried while the church was in hallowing. And in the time of procession, a fair old man came to the king and demanded of him alms in the worship of God and S. John the Evangelist. Then the king found nothing ready to give, ne his almoner was not present, but he took off the ring from his finger and gave it to the poor man, whom the poor man thanked and departed. And within certain years after, two pilgrims of England went into the holy land to visit holy places there, and as they had lost their way and were gone from their fellowship, and the night approached, and they sorrowed greatly as they that wist not whither to go, and dreaded sore to be perished among wild beasts; at the last they saw a fair company of men arrayed in white clothing, with two lights borne afore them, and behind them there came a fair ancient man with white hair for age. Then these pilgrims thought to follow the light and drew nigh. Then the old man asked them what they were, and of what region, and they answered that they were pilgrims of England, and had lost their fellowship and way also. Then this old man comforted them goodly, and brought them into a fair city where was a fair cenacle honestly arrayed with all manner of dainties, and when they had well refreshed them and rested there all night, on the morn this fair old man went with them, and brought them in the right way again. And he was glad to hear them talk of the welfare and holiness of their king S. Edward. And when he should depart from them, then he told them what he was, and said: 'I am John the Evangelist, and say

ye unto Edward your king that I greet him right well, by the token that he gave to me this ring with his own hands at the hallowing of my church, which ring ye shall deliver to him again. And say ye to him that he dispose his goods, for within six months he shall be in the joy of heaven with me, where he shall have his reward for his chastity and for his good living. And dread ye not, for ye shall speed right well in your journey, and ye shall come home in short time safe and sound.' And when he had delivered to them the ring he departed from them suddenly. And soon after they came home and did their message to the king, and delivered to him the ring, and said that S. John Evangelist sent it to him. And as soon as he heard that name he was full of joy, and for gladness let fall tears from his eyes, giving laud and thanksgiving to Almighty God, and to S. John his avowry that he would vouchsafe to let him have knowledge of his departing out of this world. Also he had another token of S. John, and that was that the two pilgrims should die tofore him, which thing was proved true, for they lived not long after. And at the feast of Christmas the king was sick; and on the day of the Innocents he heard mass in the new church of Westminster, which he had re-edified; and then he, giving thankings unto Almighty God, returned into his chamber sore sick, there abiding the mercy of our Lord. And all the lords, gentles, and commons were in great heaviness when they understood that the king might not live; remembering what wealth and prosperity the land had been in during his days, and what jeopardy it

was like to stand in after his decease. Then all things were committed to the queen, whom he loved specially, and she full diligently ministered to him all things necessary. And when he was so feeble by sickness that his natural heat was almost gone, he lay nigh two days in a trance, as a man that had been ravished; and when he came to himself again they that were about him marvelled greatly, for they weened verily that he should no more have spoken. Notwithstanding after, he spake with a noble spirit these words: 'O thou merciful Lord God, that art infinite Almighty, in whose power all things be put, which changest realms and empires; if those things be true that thou hast showed to me, so grant me space and strength to declare them to my people, that if peradventure they give them to penance they may have grace and forgiveness.' Then Almighty God gave to him a new strength that passeth all man's reason, and that might not be without miracle; for before that time he spake so soft that for feebleness he might not well be heard; and at that time he spake with a whole breast these words following: 'When I was young and dwelled in Normandy, I loved well the fellowship of good men, for he that spake most religiously and goodly, with him was I most conversant. And among all others there were twain to whom I drew much for their honest conversation, and for the holiness of their life, sweetness of their manners and their comfortable words, whom I saw translated into heaven; for many years gone they died, and now they have appeared to me by the sufferance of God

and have showed to me the state of my people, and what sins reign among them, and what vengeance shall be taken on them for their sins. Priests have offended, for they minister the holy sacraments with unclean thoughts and polluted hands, and as an hired man and not as a very shepherd defend not their sheep ne feed them. And as for princes and gentles, they be found false and untrue, and fellows to fiends, thieves, and robbers of the country, which have no dread of God ne honour him. And true law is a burden to them, and had in despite, and cruelness much used. And the prelates keep not righteousness, they correct not their subjects, ne teach ne inform them as they should do. And therefore our Lord hath now drawn out his sword of vengeance to smite his people. This punishment shall begin within this year both by sword and wasting this realm piteously. And then I began to sigh and mourn for the trouble that was coming to my people, and said: If they would be turned and do penance, shall not they have forgiveness and God shall bless them again? And it was answered to me: The hearts of the people be so indurate and so blinded, and their ears so stopped, that they will not hear of no correction, ne they be not moved ne provoked by no benefits that our Lord giveth them. Then I asked if there were any remedy that might attemper the wrath of our Lord. To whom it was answered in these words: A green tree cut from his stock shall be divided from his proper root the space of three furlongs, and without man's hand shall turn again to his old root and take again his sap, and

flourisheth and bringeth forth fruit, and when this is done there may come remedy. And when this was said they were suddenly gone out of my sight.'

There was about the king that time, the queen, duke Harold her brother, Robert, keeper of the palace, and Stigand. This Stigand gave no credence to the king's words, but ascribed it to his age, and to the feebleness of the king, and made it but a fantasy; but others that were better advised, wept and sorrowed and wrung their hands, and sent to our holy father the pope, giving him information of the same vision. And our holy father wrote epistles to England exhorting the people to do penance, but his writing profited not. But when king Harold had broken the oath that he had made to duke William, therefor he was slain in battle, then they knew well that the prophecy of S. Edward was come. For then the liberty of England made an end, and then came in bondship and thraldom. That time England was all changed, and I understand S. Dunstan prophesied the same trouble coming, and after a certain time he promised comfort also. Wherefore this foresaid vision may be conveniently expounded as here followeth. The tree signifieth the realm of England, whose greatness and fairness betokeneth riches plenteous and honour of England, of whom all worship proceedeth whence worship hath proceeded, of the true blood of the land and of the true lineage which descended from Alfred, which our holy father the pope crowned and anointed king, as for the first king of the true line of England, unto this holy king Edward, by succession. The tree is cut down from

the stock when the realm is divided and translated from one seed or lineage to another. The space of three furlongs is the time of three kings, that is to say Harold, William Conqueror, and William his son. The coming again of the tree to the stock without man's help was when king Henry the first came into the realm, not by man's strength but by the very true love of his commons. He took his sap and his very strength when he wedded Maud the daughter of the niece of S. Edward, joining together the seed of England and of Normandy, and the tree flourished when Maud the empress sprang of their seed, and it brought forth fruit when of her came Henry the Second, and thus these two people were joined together. If this exposition displease any man, let him expound it better, or else let him abide a time till it be fulfilled, so that the prophecy of king Edward accord to the prophecy of S. Dunstan.

This holy king S. Edward, knowing that his hour drew nigh, spake to them that stood weeping about him, and in comforting them said: 'Forsooth if ye loved me ye would pray that I should pass from this world to the father of heaven, there to receive the joy which is promised to all true christian men. Put ye away your weeping and speed forth my journey with prayers, with holy psalms and with almsdeeds. For though mine enemy the fiend may not overcome me in my faith, yet there is none found so perfect but he will assay and tempt to let or to fear him.' And then he commended the queen to her brother in commending her virtues unto his lords, and declared to them their pure chastity. And he commanded

also that her dowry should be made sure to her, and they that came with him out of Normandy should be put to their choice, whether they should abide still in England and to be endowed with livelihood after their degree, or else to return again into Normandy with a sufficient reward. And he chose his place for his sepulture in the church of S. Peter, which he had new builded, and said he should not long abide in this world. And when he beheld the queen and saw her weep and sigh among, he said to her ofttimes: 'My daughter, weep not, for I shall not die, but I shall live, and shall depart from the land of death, and believe to see the goodness of God in the land of life.' And then he set his mind all in God, and gave himself wholly to the faith of the church, in the hope and promises of Christ under the sacraments of the church. And among these words of praising, he yielded up his spirit unto God, in the year of our Lord one thousand and sixty-six, when he had reigned in this land twenty-three years and six months and twenty-seven days, the fourth day of January. And as his cousins and his lovers stood about this holy body when the spirit was passed, they saw a marvellous beauty and a heavenly sight in his face. And when they looked on his naked body, they saw it shine with a marvellous brightness for the clearness of his virginity. And then they wrapped the holy body in palls and buried it with great reverence and worship, and largely alms were given for him. And all the lords, spiritual and temporal, were present at the burying of him, thank-

ing God of the great benefits that he showed in this land during the life of the holy saint and king, S. Edward. Wherefore laud, glory and honour be given to Almighty God, world without end. Amen.

The eighth day after his burying there came a cripple to his tomb to be holpen of his great disease, which many times afore had received alms of the king's hand, and he had been washen of the king's hand on Cene - Thursday. Notwithstanding, the miracle of his curing was prolonged by the provision of God, and not showed in his lifetime; because that many miracles God showed for him in like wise he would show after his death. This cripple was called Ralph, and was a Norman born, and the sinews of his arms were shrunken together, and his feet were drawn up to his buttocks that he might not go, neither on his feet ne on his knees, but sat on a hollow vessel in manner of a basin, drawing his body after him with his hands. And when he came to the tomb, he besought Almighty God and S. Edward devoutly that he might be cured and healed of his disease, which his in lifetime had most lived by his alms. And when he had continued awhile in his prayers other people that had compassion of him prayed for him also, and at the last he lifted himself up, and felt his sinews loosed, and then he arose up and stood on his feet, and felt himself made perfectly whole for to do what he should.

We have read of the virtues that S. Edward had in healing blind men in his living, which our Lord hath not withdrawn from him after his death. It

happed that thirty days after his burying, there came to his tomb a man which had but one eye, leading after him six blind men, and each of them held other by the skirt. And all they devoutly prayed to God and to S. Edward that they might have their sight and to be delivered of the great misery that they stood in, and much people came thither for to see what should befall of this thing. And when they saw how heartily these blind men prayed, then all the people, being moved with pity, kneeled down devoutly, and prayed for them to God and to this holy saint. And anon as they had ended their prayers all they received perfectly their sight. And then each of them that had been blind looked fast on each other, and thought it a new world with them. And each enquired of other if they might see, and they said yea. And all kneeled down, thanking God full heartily that by the merits of S. Edward he had restored to them their sight perfectly, and also to their leader, which had but one eye at his coming, and had sight of the blind eye also, and so all had their perfect sight. And after, they returned home each into his country, giving laud and thankings to God and to this holy king.

After this Harold Harfager, king of Norway, and Tosti, brother of king Harold of England, came with a great navy and a great host, and arrived in Humber, and there made war, intending to conquer this land. Howbeit, the people began to resist them, but they were not of power to overcome them. And when Harold understood this, he raised a great multitude of people to withstand them. Then S. Edward on

a night appeared to a holy monk, which was abbot of Rumsey, and bade him go and tell to Harold that he should overcome his enemies, the which intended to destroy and consume this realm of England; 'and say to him that he dread not, for I shall so conduct him and his host, that he shall have victory, for I may not see ne suffer this realm of England to be destroyed. And when thou hast told to him this, he will not believe thee, wherefore thou shalt prove thy vision in this manner. Let him think and set his mind on what thing he will, and thou shalt tell him what he thinketh, for God shall show that to thee, and then he shall give credence to thy words.' On the morn the abbot of Rumsey, named Alexis, went to king Harold and told to him this vision, and how he should by the aid of S. Edward overcome his enemies. And when he heard it first, he supposed it had been a fantasy, and when he showed to him his privy thought, then he gave faith thereto and went to the battle, howbeit that he was then sick in his groin of a pestilence botch; and slew Tosti, his brother, and Harold Harfager, and right few or none escaped alive, from the battle. Wherefore the Englishman thanked God and S. Edward of their victory.

In the monastery of Westminster there was a fair young man which was blind, whom the monks had ordained to ring the bells, and he had a custom daily to visit the tomb of S. Edward with certain prayers. And on a time as he prayed there, he fell asleep, and he heard a voice that bade him go and ring to the last hour. And when he awoke he saw S. Edward going tofore him like a king with a crown on his head,

and had marvellous light about him. And he beheld him till he came to the high altar, and then he saw him no more, ne the light, but he had his sight ever after till his life's end; and then he told unto the monks how he was healed, and had his sight again by this miracle.

S. IVES

S. IVES was born in little Britain in the diocese of Trygvier, begotten of parents noble and catholic, and it was revealed to his mother in her sleep that he should be sanctified. In his first age he was of right good conditions, and right humbly and devoutly frequented the churches, hearing ententively the masses and the sermons. Much of his time he employed to study busily the holy letters, and read much curiously the lives of the saints, and pained himself much with all his power for to ensue them; the which by process of time was adorned of right great wisdom and renowned full of great science both in right civil and in canon law, and also in theology well lettered as it appeared sith, as well in contemplation and judgment as giving counsel to the souls upon the fait of their conscience. For after that he had occupied and exercised much holily and devoutly the fait of advocacy in the bishop's court of Trygvier, ever pleading without taking any salary the causes of the miserable and poor persons, exposing himself to it with his good gree and not required by them for to defend their questions and differences, he was chosen into the office of the official, first in the court of the archdeacon of Rennes, and afterwards in the said court of the bishop of Trygvier. He succoured them that were

oppressed and that had had wrong, and to every each one rendered his own by right, without any acception or taking of money nor none other good. The which then, called to the government and guiding of souls, bare ever with him the Bible and his breviary or portos, and so he, made and ordained in the order of priesthood, celebrated mass as every day, and heard much humbly, devoutly and diligently the confessions of his parisshens. He visited the sick folk without difference, and recomforted them right wisely, and taught to them the way of their salvation, and devoutly administered unto them the precious and blessed body of our Lord Jesu Christ: and for certain in all things appertaining to the cure of the people of our Lord Jesu Christ committed to him, he in all and over all accomplished duly and right worthily his mystery. He profited ever, going busily from virtue into virtue; and was pleasant both to God and to the world, insomuch that the folk were full loth to depart from his words and from his fellowship, and much abashed were they that saw him for cause of his friendly manner and for wonderful holiness; what marvel he was of admirable or wonderful humility, which he showed over all in habit or clothing, in deed, in words, going, coming, and being in divers companies. He spake ever to the folk, both more and less, sweetly and full meekly looking on the earth, his hood before his face, that he should not be praised of the folk and to eschew all vanities. And by the space of fifteen years before his death he ne ware but coarse cloth, russet or white, such as poor folk of the country be

accustomed to wear. He held the ewer and also the towel while the poor washed their hands, and after with his own hands administered to them the meat that they should eat, and setting himself on the ground ate with them of the said meat, that is to wit brown bread and sometimes a little pottage. And among them that ate with him he had no prerogative, but the most deformed and most miserable he set nigh him. He lay all night on the ground and had for his bedding, for sheets, for coverlet and for hanging only a little straw. Ever before the celebration of his mass, ere he revested him, he kneeled down before the altar, and devoutly made his prayer, weeping and piteously sighing, and oft-times as he celebrated his mass plenty of tears fell from his eyes along his face. The humility of whom pleased much unto our Lord as once it appeared by a columbe or dove of marvellous splendour which openly was seen flying within the church of Trygvier about the altar where this holy S. Ives said mass. And certainly full patiently he suffered all injuries and blasphemies; for when men did mock him or said evil to him he answered nothing, but having his thought on God sustained their evil words patiently and with great joy. A man he was of tranquillity, for he loved peace, and never he was moved to no strife, indignation, or ire for nothing that ever was done to him. He was defensor, without dread, of the liberties of the church, wherof it happed that as a sergeant of the king's had taken and led with him the bishop's horse of Trygvier for the encheson of the centime of the goods of the foresaid bishop, S. Ives then being

in the office of official, virtuously took the said horse from the said sergeant and led him again unto the bishop's place. And howbeit that men deemed and weened that great evil or damage should fall therefor, as well to S. Ives as to the church, seeing that the sergeant was about to have procured it, nevertheless no manner of damage came never thereof, neither to the saint nor to the church. Which thing was holden and reputed for a miracle and not without cause attributed to the merits of the said S. Ives; for it is believed and testified that he was chaste both of flesh and in thought all the time of his life, and also chaste both in words and of eyes, and lived always so honestly and so chastely that never no tokens of worldly manners appeared on him, but certainly ever he abhorred and cursed the sin of lechery, and he being accustomed to preach against the said sin made many a person to flee from it. He was never found slothful ne negligent, but ever ready to orison or predication, or else he was studying in the holy scriptures or doing works of charity and pity. Ever eschewing all vain words, he spake but little and with pain, save the words of God and of salvation perdurable. And he, preaching the word of God right well and boldly, brought oft them that heard him to compunction of heart and evermore unto tears; and he, exercising and occupying him in this holy operation or work thereas he might be heard by the leave of the bishops and diocesans, ever going on foot, preached sometimes upon a day in four churches, much far from one another. And to the end that he should not leave the custom of his

abstinence, he after this great labour returned fasting unto his house, and would never accord with no man to dine with him. He had the spirit of prophecy, for he prophesied that a recluse should be seen among men by the vice of covetise. The which thing happed not long after, for the myschaunte recluse, leaving the way of salvation and of penitence, went out from his cell and took a worldly and damnable way.

This holy S. Ives laboured ever to appease all discordance and strife after his power, and the folk which might not accord by his persuasion and admonishings were called soon to concord after his orison by him made to God.

It may not be recounted, ne never it was seen in our time, the great charity, pity, and misericorde that he had towards the poor, indigent and suffretous, towards the widows and to the poor children both father- and motherless, all the time of his life. All that he received or might have, as well of the church as of his patrimony, he gave to them without any difference when he was dwelling at Rennes and promoted to the office of official there at the court of the archdeacon. Also, ere he changed his manner of living, he made upon the great and solemn holidays plenty of meat to be dressed and ready for to eat, and at dinner-time he called and made to be called the poor folk to dinner, and to them administered meat with his own hands, and after he ate with two poor children which for the love of our Lord Jesu Christ he sustained at school. For ever he was right courteous to help children, both father- and mother-

less, and, as their father, sent them to school, and with his own sustained them and paid also the salary to their masters. He revested right courteously the poor naked of our Lord. It happed once that a poor man came against him, and he having as then nothing ready to give and taking greater care of the poor naked than of his own body, took a gown and a hood both of like cloth which he had do make for himself to wear, and gave them to the said poor man and went home barehead. He held hospitality indifferently for the poor pilgrims in a house which he did make for the nonce, to the which he administered both meat and drink, bed and fire for to warm them in winter. In wheresoever a place that he went the suffretous and poor, that ran to him from all sides, followed him, for all that he had was ready to their behoof as their own. He gave sudaries for to bury with the dead bodies, and with his own hands helped to bury them.

He chastised his flesh much sharply, for he was so accustomed to be in orisons and in prayers and to study, that the most part of the time he passed without sleep both day and night. If he were sore travailled by study, orisons, or going, that he as constrained must sleep, he slept on the earth, and instead of a pillow he laid under his head sometimes his book and sometimes a stone. He ware ever the hair under his shirt, whiles that yet he was in the office of the official in the city of Trygvier. He used brown bread and pottage such as commonly use poor labourers, and none other meat he ne had, and to his drink used cold water, and there lived with

such meat and drink by the space of eleven years, till he came to his death. He fasted eleven Lents and all the Advents of our Lord, and from the Ascension unto Pentecost, all ember days, all vigils of our Lady and of the apostles, and all other days stablished by holy church for to fast he fasted with bread and water. His pottage was of great coles or of other herbs or beans, or of radish root savoured only with salt without any other savour, sauf that sometimes he put in it a little flour and a little butter, and on Easterday above his accustomed pittance he ate two eggs. He never within the space of fourteen years before his death tasted of no wine, save only at mass after that he had taken the body and blood of our Lord, or else sometime when he dined with the bishop, for then within his water he put a little wine only for to change the colour. He fasted once by the space of seven days without any meat or drink, ever being in good health.

In his last sickness he ceased not to teach them that were about him, and he preached unto them of their salvation, and coming beneurely unto his last days, took humbly the sacraments of the body of our Lord and last unction, lying on a little straw. Three days before his death he had on his hood instead of kerchief about his head and had on his gown, and refusing all other things he was covered with a little and bad coverlet, saying that he was not worthy to have any other paraments on him. The pure and clean [saint] then, having lived fifty years or thereabout, issuing in the year of grace thirteen hundred and three, the nineteenth day of May, that

was on the Sunday after the Ascension of our Lord Jesu Christ unto heaven, and like as he had been asleep, without any sign or token of whatsoever dolour, took the right beneurous rest of death.

Then, as it is recorded in the book long since made and accomplished of his life and of his virtues, at his invocation, by vows and prayers by some devoutly made unto God and to the Saint in divers places, were fourteen dead raised, and ten demoniacs, mad folk, or filled with wicked spirits, were delivered from their forsenery or madness and from all wicked spirits. Thirteen contracts, or filled with paralysis, were by the same restored in good health. Three blind were by him illumined. Divers folk, in ten places, all with their goods were kept and saved from drowning in the sea. The hood which he gave to a poor man, as above is said, and went barehead homeward, God that had himself in form or likeness of a poor man received the said hood, as it may be believed, sent to him again the said hood, whereof was great and marvellous miracle. On a time when he had given all his bread to poor folks, loaves of bread were brought to him enough to suffice him and the poor people in his fellowship withal, by a woman unknown, the which after her present delivered, vanished away and never was seen after. On another time, as he had received a poor man appearing right foul and disformed, and over foul in clothing, and had made him to eat and set hand at his own dish with him, this poor man departing and saying: "God be with you and at your help," his gown that before was wonder foul, as it is said, became so

white, and of so great resplendor and shining, and his face so fair appeared and so bright, that all the house was replenished and filled with great light. The archbishop of Narbonne was vexed with a strong axes, and by the feebleness of his nature was reputed and holden as for dead of all them which about him were, for his eyes were shut in manner of a dead man. At the invocation or calling to S. Ives made for the salue of the said archbishop by his parents and friends, with weepings, vows, devotions, was the foresaid archbishop through the merits of the saint restored unto life, sight and good health; by the grace and virtue of him of whom it is written that he enlumineth the eyen, giveth life, health and blessing, light, sapience, the which God, creator, enluminator, and saviour be thanked, praised and worshipped by all the siecle and siecles! Amen.

S. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

S. THOMAS the martyr was son to Gilbert Beckett, a burgess of the city of London, and was born in the place whereas now standeth the church called S. Thomas of Acre. And this Gilbert was a good devout man, and took the cross upon him, and went on pilgrimage into the Holy Land, and had a servant with him. And when he had accomplished his pilgrimage, he was taken homeward by the heathen men and brought into the Amerant prison of a prince named Amurath, where long time he and his fellowship suffered much pain and sorrow. And the prince had great affection towards this Gilbert, and had often communication with him of the christien faith, and of the realm of England, by which conversation it fortuned that the daughter of this prince had especial love unto this Gilbert, and was familiar with him. And on a time she disclosed her love to him, saying if he would promise to wed her she should forsake friends, heritage and country, for his love and become christien, and after long communication between them he promised to wed her if she would become christien, and told to her the place of his dwelling in England. And after, by the purveyance of God, the said Gilbert escaped and came home. And after this it fortuned so that this prince's daughter stole privily away, and passed many a wild place and great adventure, and

by God's purveyance at last came to London demanding and crying 'Becket! Becket!' for more English could she not; wherefore the people drew about her, what for the strange array of her, as for that they understood her not, and many a shrewd boy. So long she went till she came tofore Gilbert's door, and as she stood there, the servant that had been with Gilbert in prison which was named Richard, saw her and knew that it was she, and went in to his master, and told him how that this maid stood at his door; and anon he went out to see her. And as soon as she saw him she fell in a swoon for joy, and Gilbert took her up, and comforted her, and brought her into his house, and sith went to the bishops, which then were six at Paul's, and rehearsed all the matter, and after they christened her, and forthwith wedded her unto Gilbert Becket, and within time reasonable and accustomed was brought forth between them a fair son named Thomas. And after this, yet the said Gilbert went again to the Holy Land and was there three years ere he came again. And this child grew forth till he was set to school, and learned well and became virtuous, and when he was twenty-four years old his mother passed out of this world. And after this he served a merchant of London a while in keeping his charge and accompts, and from him he went to Stigand, archbishop of Canterbury, and he was in so great favour with him that he made him archdeacon and chief of his counsel, and well executed he his office in punishing the culpable and cherishing the good people. And divers times went to Rome for to support and help holy church. And after this

Henry II. that was the emperice's son was made king of England, and he ordained this Thomas his chancellor, and had great rule, and the land stood in prosperity. And S. Thomas stood so greatly in the king's favour that the king was content with all that he did; and when the king went into Normandy he betook the governance of his son and the realm into the rule of S. Thomas, which he wisely governed till his return again. And anon after died Theobald, the archbishop of Canterbury, and then the king gave his nomination to S. Thomas, and by the chapter was elected in the year of his age forty-four, and was full loth to take that great charge upon him. And so at last, his bulls had, he was sacred and stalled and became a holy man, suddenly changed into a new man, doing great penance, as in wearing hair with knots, and a breech of the same down to the knees. And on a Trinity Sunday received he his dignity, and there was at that time the king with many a great lord and sixteen bishops. And from thence was sent the abbot of Evesham to the pope with other clerks for the pall which he gave and brought to him, and he full meekly received it. And under his habit he ware the habit of a monk, and so was he under within forth a monk, and outward a clerk, and did great abstinence making his body lean and his soul fat. And he used to be well served at his table, and took but little refection thereof, and lived holily in giving good ensample.

After this, many times the king went over into Normandy, and in his absence always S. Thomas

had the rule of his son and of the realm, which was governed so well that the king could him great thanks, and then abode long in this realm. And when so was that the king did any thing against the franchise and liberties of holy church, S. Thomas would ever withstand it to his power. And on a time when the sees of London and of Winchester were vacant and void, the king kept them both long in his hand for to have the profits of them; wherefore S. Thomas was heavy, and came to the king and desired him to give those two bishopricks to some virtuous men. And anon the king granted to him his desire and ordained one master Roger bishop of Winchester, and the Earl of Gloucester's son, named Sir Robert, bishop of London. And anon after S. Thomas hallowed the abbey of Reading, which the first Henry founded. And that same year he translated S. Edward, king and confessor at Westminster, where he was laid in a rich shrine. And in some short time after, by the enticement of the devil, fell great debate, variance, and strife, between the king and S. Thomas, and the king sent for all the bishops to appear tofore him at Westminster at a certain day, at which day they assembled tofore him, whom he welcomed, and after said to them how that the archbishop would destroy his law and not suffer him to enjoy such things as his predecessors had used tofore him. Whereto S. Thomas answered that he never intended to do thing that should displease the king as far as it touched not the franchise and liberties of holy church. Then the king rehearsed how he would

not suffer clerks that were thieves to have the execution of the law; to which S. Thomas said, that he ought not to execute them, but they longeth to the correction of holy church, and other divers points. To the which the king said: 'Now I see well that thou wouldest fordo the laws of this land which have been used in the days of my predecessors, but it shall not lie in thy power,' and so the king being wroth departed. Then the bishops all counselled S. Thomas to follow the king's intent, or else the land should be in great trouble; and in like wise the lords temporal that were his friends counselled him the same; and S. Thomas said: 'I take God to record it was never mine intent to displease the king, or to take any thing that longeth to his right or honour.' And then the lords were glad and brought him to the king to Oxenford, and the king deigned not to speak to him. And then the king called all the lords spiritual and temporal tofore him, and said he would have all the laws of his forefathers there new confirmed, and there they were confirmed by all the lords spiritual and temporal. And after this the king charged them for to come to him to Clarendon to his parliament at a certain day assigned, on pain to run in his indignation; and at that time so departed. And this parliament was holden at Clarendon, the eleventh year of the king's reign, and the year of our Lord eleven hundred and sixty-four. At this parliament were many lords which all were against S. Thomas. And then the king sitting in his parliament, in the presence of all his lords, demanded them if they would abide and

keep the laws that had been used in his forefathers' days. Then S. Thomas spake for the part of holy church, and said: 'All old laws that be good and rightful, and not against our mother holy church, I grant with good will to keep them.' And then the king said that he would not leave one point of his law, and waxed wroth with S. Thomas. And then certain bishops required S. Thomas to obey to the king's desire and will, and S. Thomas desired respite to know the laws, and then to give him an answer. And when he understood them all, to some he consented, but many he denied and would never be agreeable to them, wherefore the king was wroth and said he would hold and keep them like as his predecessors had done before him, and would not minish one point of them. Then S. Thomas said to the king with full great sorrow and heavy cheer, 'Now, my most dear lord and gracious king, have pity on us of holy church, your bedemen, and give to us respite for a certain time.' And thus departed each man. And S. Thomas went to Winchester, and there prayed our Lord devoutly for holy church, and to give him aid and strength for to defend it, for utterly he determined to abide by the liberties and franchise; and fell down on his knees and said, full sore weeping: 'O good Lord, I acknowledge that I have offended, and for mine offence and trespass this trouble cometh to holy church: I purpose, good Lord, to go to Rome for to be assoiled of mine offences'; and departed towards Canterbury. And anon the king sent his officers to his manors and despoiled them, because he would not obey the

king's statutes. And the king commanded to seize all his lands and goods into his hands, and then his servants departed from him; and he went to the seaside for to have gone over sea, but the wind was against him, and so thrice he took his ship and might not pass. And then he knew that it was not our Lord's will that he should yet depart, and returned secretly to Canterbury, of whose coming his meiny made great joy. And on the morn came the king's officers for to seize all his goods; for the noise was that S. Thomas had fled the land; wherefore they had despoiled all his manors and seized them into the king's hand. And when they came they found him at Canterbury, whereof they were sore abashed, and returned to the king informing him that he was yet at Canterbury, and anon after S. Thomas came to the king to Woodstock for to pray him to be better disposed towards holy church And then said the king to him in scorn: 'May not we two dwell both in this land? Art thou so sturdy and hard of heart?' To whom S. Thomas answered: 'Sire, that was never my thought, but I would fain please you, and do all that you desire; so that ye hurt not the liberties of holy church; for them will I maintain while I live, ever to my power.' With which words the king was sore moved, and swore that he would have them kept, and especial if a clerk were a thief he should be judged and executed by the king's law, and by no spiritual law, and said he would never suffer a clerk to be his master in his own land, and charged S. Thomas to appear before him at Northampton, and to bring all the bishops of

this land with him; and so departed. S. Thomas besought God of help and succour, for the bishops which ought to be with him were most against him. After this S. Thomas went to Northampton where the king had then his great council in the castle with all his lords, and when he came tofore the king he said: 'I am come to obey your commandment, but before this time was never bishop of Canterbury thus entreated, for I am head of the Church of England, and am to you, Sir King, your ghostly father, and it was never God's law that the son should destroy his father which hath charge of his soul. And by your striving have you made all the bishops that should abide by the right of the church to be against holy church and me, and ye know well that I may not fight, but am ready to suffer death rather than I should consent to lose the right of holy church.' Then said the king: 'Thou speakest as a proud clerk, but I shall abate thy pride ere I leave thee, for I must reckon with thee. Thou understandest well that thou wert my chancellor many years, and once I lent to thee £500 which thou never yet hast repaid, which I will that thou pay me again or else incontinent thou shalt go to prison.' And then S. Thomas answered: 'Ye gave me that £500, and it is not fitting to demand that which ye have given.' Notwithstanding he found surety for the said £500 and departed for that day. And after this, the next day the king demanded £30,000 that he had surmised on him to have stolen, he being chancellor, whereupon he desired day to answer; at which time he said that when he was archbishop

he set him free therein without any claim or debt before good record, wherefore he ought not to answer unto that demand. And the bishops desired S. Thomas to obey the king; but in no wise he would not agree to such things as should touch against the liberties of the church. And then they came to the king, and forsook S. Thomas, and agreed to all the king's desire, and the proper servants of S. Thomas fled from him and forsook him, and then poor people came and accompanied him. And on the night came to him two lords and told to him that the king's meiny had emprised to slay him. And the next night after he departed in the habit of a brother of Sempringham, and so chevissed that he went over sea.

And in the meanwhile certain bishops went to Rome for to complain on him to the pope, and the king sent letters to the king of France not to receive him. And the King Louis said that, though a man were banished and had committed there trespasses, yet should he be free in France. And so after, when this holy S. Thomas came, he received him well, and gave him licence to abide there and do what he would. In this meanwhile the king of England sent certain lords unto the pope complaining on the Archbishop Thomas, which made grievous complaints, which when the pope had heard said, he would give none answer till that he had heard the Archbishop Thomas speak, which would hastily come thither. But they would not abide his coming, but departed without speeding of their intents, and came into England again. And

anon after, S. Thomas came to Rome on S. Mark's day at afternoon, and when his caterer should have bought fish for his dinner because it was fasting day, he could get none for no money, and came and told to his lord S. Thomas so, and he bade him buy such as he could get, and then he bought flesh and made it ready for their dinner. And S. Thomas was served with a capon roasted, and his meiny with boiled meat. And so it was that the pope heard that he was come, and sent a cardinal to welcome him, and he found him at his dinner eating flesh, which anon returned and told to the pope how he was not so perfect a man as he had supposed, for contrary to the rule of the church he eateth this day flesh. The pope would not believe him, but sent another cardinal which for more evidence took the leg of the capon in his kerchief and affirmed the same, and opened his kerchief tofore the pope, and he found the leg turned into a fish called a carp. And when the pope saw it, he said, they were not true men to say such things of this good bishop. They said faithfully that it was flesh that he ate. After this S. Thomas came to the pope and did his reverence and obedience, whom the pope welcomed, and after communication he demanded him what meat he had eaten, and he said: 'Flesh as ye have heard tofore, because he could find no fish and very need compelled him thereto.' Then the pope understood of the miracle that the capon's leg was turned into a carp, and of his goodness granted to him and to all them of the diocese of Canterbury licence to eat flesh ever after on S. Mark's day when it falleth

on a fish day, and pardon withal; which is kept and accustomed unto this day. And then S. Thomas informed the pope how the king of England would have him consent to divers articles against the liberties of holy church, and what wrongs he did to the same, and that for to die he would never consent to them. And when the pope had heard him he wept for pity, and thanked God that he had such a bishop under him that had so well defended the liberties of holy church, and anon wrote out letters and bulls commanding all the bishops of Christendom to keep and observe the same. And then S. Thomas offered to the pope his bishopric up into the pope's hand, and his mitre with the cross and ring, and the pope commanded him to keep it still, and said he knew no man more able than he was. And after S. Thomas said mass tofore the pope in a white chasuble; and after mass he said to the pope that he knew by revelation that he should suffer death for the right of holy church, and when it should fall that chasuble should be turned from white into red. And after he departed from the pope and came down into France unto the abbey of Pounteney; and there he had knowledge that when the lords spiritual and temporal which had been at Rome were come home and had told the king that they might in no wise have their intent, that the king was greatly wroth, and anon banished all the kinsmen that were longing to S. Thomas that they should incontinent void his land, and made them swear that they should go to him and tell to him that for his sake they were exiled; and so they went over sea to him at Pounteney

and he being there was full sorry for them. And after there was a great chapter in England of the monks of Cysteaus and there the king desired them to write to Pounteney that they should no longer keep ne sustain Thomas the Archbishop, for if they did, he would destroy them of that order being in England. And, for fear thereof they wrote so over to Pounteney that he must depart thence with his kinsmen, and so he did, and was then full heavy, and remitted his cause to God. And anon after, the king of France sent to him that he should abide where it pleased him, and dwell in his realm, and he would pay for the costs of him and his kinsmen. And he departed and went to Sens, and the abbot brought him on the way. And S. Thomas told him how he knew by a vision that he should suffer death and martyrdom for the right of the church, and prayed him to keep it secret during his life. After this the king of England came into France, and there told the king how S. Thomas would destroy his realm, and then there told how he would foredo such laws as his elders had used tofore him, wherefore S. Thomas was sent for, and they were brought together. And the king of France laboured sore for to set them at accord, but it would not be, for that one would not minish his laws and accustoms, and S. Thomas would not grant that he should do contrary the liberties of holy church. And then the king of France held with the king of England against S. Thomas, and was wroth with him and commanded him to void his realm with all his kinsmen. And then S. Thomas wist not whither to go;

but comforted his kinsmen as well as he might, and purposed to have gone in to Provence for to have begged his bread. And as he was going, the king of France sent for him again, and when he came he cried him mercy and said he had offended God and him, and bade him abide in his realm where he would, and he would pay for the dispenses of him and his kin. And in the meanwhile the king of England ordained his son king, and made him to be crowned by the Archbishop of York and other bishops, which was against the statutes of the land, for the Archbishop of Canterbury should have consented and also have crowned him, wherefore S. Thomas gat a bull for to do accurse them that so did against him, and also on them that occupied the goods longing to him. And yet after this the king laboured so much that he accorded the king of England and S. Thomas; which accord endured not long, for the king varied from it afterward. But S. Thomas, upon this accord, came home to Canterbury, where he was received worshipfully, and sent for them that had trespassed against him, and by the authority of the pope's bull openly denounced them accursed unto the time they come to amendment. And when they knew this they came to him and would have made him to assoil them by force; and sent word over to the king how he had done, whereof the king was much wroth and said: 'If he had men in his land that loved him, they would not suffer such a traitor in his land alive.'

And forthwith four knights took their counsel together and thought they would do to the king a

pleasure, and emprised to slay S. Thomas, and suddenly departed and took their shipping towards England. And when the king knew of their departing he was sorry and sent after them, but they were on the sea and departed ere the messengers came, wherefore the king was heavy and sorry.

These be the names of the four knights: Sir Reginald Fitzureson, Sir Hugh de Morville, Sir William de Tracy, Sir Richard le Brito. On Christmas day S. Thomas made a sermon at Canterbury in his own church, and weeping, prayed the people to pray for him, for he knew well his time was nigh.

And these four knights aforesaid came to Canterbury on the Tuesday in Christmas week about Evensong time, and came to S. Thomas and said that the king commanded him to make amends for the wrongs that he had done, and also that he should assoil all them that he had accursed anon, or else they should slay him. Then said Thomas: 'All that I ought to do by right, that will I with a good will do, but as to the sentence that is executed I may not undo, but that they will submit them to the correction of holy church; for it was done by our holy father the pope and not by me.' Then said Sir Reginald: 'But if thou assoil the king and all other standing in the curse, it shall cost thee thy life.' And S. Thomas said: 'Thou knowest well enough that the king and I were accorded on Mary Magdalene day, and that this curse should go forth on them that had offended the church.'

Then one of the knights smote him as he kneeled

before the altar on the head. And one Sir Edward Grim, that was his crozier, put forth his arm with the cross to bear off the stroke, and the stroke smote the cross asunder and his arm almost off; wherefore he fled for fear, and so did all the monks, that were that time at compline. And then smote each at him, that they smote off a great piece of the skull of his head, that his brain fell on the pavement. And so they slew and martyred him, and were so cruel that one of them brake the point of his sword against the pavement. And thus this holy and blessed Archbishop S. Thomas suffered death in his own church for the right of all holy church. And when he was dead they stirred his brain, and after went in to his chamber and took away his goods, and his horse out of his stable, and took away his bulls and writings, and delivered them to Sir Robert Broke to bear into France to the king. And as they searched his chamber they found in a chest two shirts of hair made full of great knots, and then they said: 'Certainly he was a good man'; and coming down into the churchyard they began to dread and fear that the ground would not have borne them, and were marvellously aghast, but they supposed that the earth would have swallowed them all quick. And then they knew that they had done amiss. And anon it was known all about how that he was martyred, and anon after took this holy body and unclothed him and found bishop's clothing above and the habit of a monk under. And next his flesh he wore hard hair, full of knots, which was his shirt. And he was thus martyred the year of our Lord one

thousand one hundred and seventy-one, and was fifty-three years old. And soon after tidings came to the king how he was slain, wherefore the king took great sorrow, and sent to Rome for his absolution.

Now after that S. Thomas departed from the pope, the pope would daily look upon the white chasuble that S. Thomas had said mass in, and the same day that he was martyred he saw it turned into red, whereby he knew well that that same day he suffered martyrdom for the right of holy church, and commanded a mass of requiem solemnly to be sung for his soul. And when the quire began to sing requiem, an angel on high above began the office of a martyr: *Laetabitur justus*, and then all the quire followed singing forth the mass of the office of a martyr. And the pope thanked God that it pleased him to show such miracles for his holy martyr, at whose tomb by the merits and prayers of this holy martyr our blessed Lord hath showed many miracles. The blind have recovered their sight, the dumb their speech, the deaf their hearing, the lame their limbs, and the dead their life. If I should here express all the miracles that it hath pleased God to show for this holy saint it should contain a whole volume.

S. LOUIS

S. LOUIS, sometime the noble king of France, had to his father a king right christian, named Louis. This Louis father battled and fought against the heretics and Albigenses of the country of Toulouse, and extirpated their heresy, and as he returned into France he passed unto our Lord. Then the child, of holy childhood fatherless, abode and dwelled under the keeping of the queen Blanche his mother, sometime daughter to the king of Castile, and as she that loved him tenderly betook him for to be learned and taught under the cure and governance of a special master in conditions and in letters, and he also, as the young Solomon child, wise and disposed to have a good soul, profited right greatly in all things, more than any child of his age. Of which good life and childhood his debonair mother enjoying herself, said ofttimes to him in this manner: 'Right dear son, rather I would see the death coming on thee than to see thee fall into a deadly sin against thy creator.' The which word the devout child took and shut it so within his courage, that, by the grace of God which defended and kept him, it is not found that ever he felt any atouchment, tache or spot of mortal crime. In the end, by the purveyance of his mother, and of the barons of the land, to the end that so noble a realm should not fail of succes-

sion royal, the holy man took a wife, of the which he received and gat on her fair children, which by sovereign cure he made to be nourished, endoctrined, and taught to the love of God and despite of the world, and to know themselves by holy admonishing and ensamples. And when he might tend secretly to them, visiting them and requiring of their profit as the ancient Tobias, gave to them admonishing of salute, teaching them over all things to dread God and to keep and abstain them assiduously from all sin. Garlands made of roses and of other flowers he forbade and defended them to wear on the Friday, for the crown of thorns that was on such a day put on the head of our Lord. And because that he wist well and knew that chastity in delices, pity in riches, and humility in honour often perish, he took and gave his courage to sobriety and good diet, to humility and misericorde, keeping himself right curiously from the pricking sautes and watch of the world, the flesh and the devil, and chastised his body and brought it to servitude by the ensample of the apostles. He forced himself to serve his spirit by diverse castigation or chastising, he used the hair many times next his flesh, and when he left it for cause of over-feebleness of his body, at the instance of his own confessor, he ordained the said confessor to give to the poor folk, as for recompensation of every day that he failed of it, forty shillings. He fasted always the Friday, and namely in time of Lent and Advent he abstained him in those days from all manner of fish and from fruits, and continually travailed and pained his body by watchings, orisons,

and other secret abstinences and disciplines. Humility, beauty of all virtues, replenished so strong in him, that the more better he waxed, so, as David, the more he showed himself meek and humble, and more foul he reputed him before God. For he was accustomed on every Saturday to wash with his own hands, in a secret place, the feet of some poor folk, and after dried them with a fair towel, and kissed much humbly and semblably their hands, distributing or dealing to every one of them a certain sum of silver; also to seven score poor men which daily came to his court he administered meat and drink with his own hands, and were fed abundantly on the vigils solemn. And on some certain days in the year to two hundred poor, before that he ate or drank, he with his own hands administered and served them both of meat and drink. He ever had, both at his dinner and supper, three ancient poor, which ate nigh to him, to whom he charitably sent of such meats as were brought before him, and sometimes the dishes and meats that the poor of our Lord had touched with their hands, and special the sops of which he fain ate, made their remnant or relief to be brought before him, to the end that he should eat it; and yet again, to honour and worship the name of our Lord on the poor folk, he was not ashamed to eat their relief. Also he would not use scarlet, ne gowns of rich cloth, ne also furring of over great price and cost. And namely sith he came from the parts of beyond sea the first time again, he coveted by great desire the growing up of the faith. Wherefore he, as very lover of the faith

and covetous for to enhance it, as he yet that of late convalesced and issued out of a grievous sickness, lying at Pontoise, took the cross with great devotion from the hands of the bishop of Paris, led with him three of his brethren with the greatest lords and barons in his realm, and many a knight and other people with him, appliked on his way, and with right great host arrived into Egypt, the which, setting foot on ground, occupied and took by force of men of arms that same city renowned which is called Damietta, and all the region about. Then after, the christian host, esprised and beat with a much great and wonderful sickness by the just judgment of God, many christian men died there, insomuch that of the number of two and thirty thousand fighting men, ne was there left on live but six thousand men. And God, father of misericorde, willing himself showed wonderful and marvellous on his saint, gave and betook the same king, champion, or defensor of the faith, into the hands of the evil paynims, to the end that he should appear more marvellous. And as the debonair king might have escaped by the next ship nigh thence, always he yielded himself with his good gree, to the end that he might deliver his people through the encheson of him.

He was put to great ransom, which paid, he would yet abide prisoner for the payment or ransom of other his lords and barons, and then after, he put and left so as Joseph out of the chartre or prison of Egypt, not as fleeing or dreadful returned anon unto the proper or own parts; but first abode continually by the space of five years in Syria, where he con-

verted many paynims to the faith, and he being there, the christians out of the paynim hands ditched and fortified many towns and castles with strong walls. He found then about Sidon many dead bodies of christian men, of which many one was dismembered and eaten with beasts and stank over much; the which he gathered and assembled with his own hands, with the aid and help of his meiny, which unnethe might endure ne suffer the stench of them, and humbly and devoutly betook them to the burying of holy church.

And after this, understanding the sickness of the queen his mother, by the counsel of his barons he assented to return into France. And as he was upon the sea, on the third night after, nigh the rising of Aurora, the ship where the king was in, hurted and smote twice against the rock so strongly that the mariners and other there weened that the ship should have broken and been plunged in the sea. And then the priests, clerks, and the other folk there, abashed with so great hurting of the said ship, found the holy king devoutly praying before the body of our Lord; wherefore they firmly believed that God Almighty, by the merits and prayers of this holy king, had saved them from the foresaid peril of death. Then the said saint, so returned into France, was received of all there with great joy, and the more ardently or burningly profiting from virtue into virtue, became to all manner perfection of life. And howbeit that miseration and pity was growing in him from his youth, nevertheless he showed then more evidently his charitable deeds on the poor folk,

succouring them profitably, so as he might at their need.

He began then to build and found hospitals or houses for poor people to lie in, edified minsters of religion, and gave yearly to other poor sufferers in divers places in the realm much money, pecunies or silver. He founded many convents of the order of friars preachers, and to many other poor religious builded churches, cloisters, dortoirs, and other edifices convenable, gave for God largely alms to the blind, beguines, daughters of God, and releved the minster of many a poor nunnery. He enriched many a church founded by him with great revenues and rents, in which he many times exercised the office of charity and of marvellous humility, humbly and devoutly serving the poor with his own hands by great misericorde.

When he came in Paris, or in other cities, he visited the hospitals and other small houses where poor people lay in; and without abomination of deformity ne of ordure or filth of some patient or sick, administered, many times kneeling, giving meat to the poor with his own hands. In the abbey of Royalmont, which he founded and endowed with great revenue and rents, is showed notorily that such and semblable alms he made there many times.

And yet greater marvel, a monk of the said abbey, a leper, an abominable, and as then deprived both of nose and eyes by corruption of the said sickness, the blessed S. Louis administered, humbly putting, kneeling, with his own hands both meat and drink within the mouth of the said leper without any

abomination. The abbot there present, which unnethe might see that, wept and sighed piteously. And howbeit that to all indigent he opened the bosom of misericorde, nevertheless to them that watched in divine services, and that prayed for souls, he made greater alms and ofter. And by the great alms that he dealt every year to the convents in Paris, both of the friars predicators and minors, said sometime to his familiars: 'O God, how this alms is well set or bestowed on so much and so great number of friars affluing and coming to Paris out from all lands for to learn the divine scriptures, and to the end they might show and utter them through all the world to the cure and salvation of souls!'

Other alms that he did through the year, no tongue should suffice for to rehearse it. He worshipped the holy relics with much great devotion, and assiduously grew the cultiving of God and the honour of the saints. He builded in Paris a fair chapel within the palace royal, in which he purposed and put right diligently the holy crown of thorns to our Lord, with a great part of the holy cross. Also the iron or head of the spear wherewith the side of our Lord was opened, with many other relics which he received of the emperor of Constantinople. He would speak to nobody while that he was at church hearing the divine service, without it were for great need or great utility of the commonweal, and then with short and substantious words uttered that he would say, to the end that his devotion should not be letted. He might not hear, ne forbear the reproaches or blasphemies done to the christian faith, but he,

enamoured of the love of God, as Phineas, punished them right grievously.

Whereof it befell that a citizen of Paris who loathly swearing had blasphemed Jesu Christ, against the act or statute royal, which S. Louis by the counsel of the prelates and princes had ordained and made for the swearers and blasphemers, at the commandment of the said saint he was marked or tokened, at the lips of him with a hot and burning iron, in sign of punition of his sin, and terror and dreadfulness to all others. And how for cause of that, he hearing some say and cast in on him many cursings, said: 'I would fain sustain on my lips such laidure or shame as long as I shall live, so that all the evil vice of swearing were left and cast out from all our realm.'

He had the signacle or figure of the holy cross in so great reverence that he eschewed to tread on it, and required of many religious that, within their churchyard and tombs they ne should from thence orthon portray ne depict the form or figure of the cross and that the crosses so portrayed and figured, they should make to be planed. O how great reverence he had! He also went every year on the good Friday to the chapel within the palace royal for to worship there the holy cross, kneeling, both feet and head bare.

Of diligent discussing of causes and matters he rendered or yielded just judgment. Of very dilection or love, he doubting that the strife, actions and pleadings of the poor should come only to the presence and knowledge of his councillors, he went and presided among them at the least twice in a

week for to hear the plaints which lightly he made to be discussed and soon after justly urged. He stablished also, for to have away the burning covetise of the usurers, that no justicer should compel ne constrain them that were bounden to the Jews or to other public usurers by letters ne by none other manner, to pay or yield to them their usury or growing.

In the end, after the course or running of many years, understanding and by true report knowing the desolation and perplexity and perils of the holy land, as another Maccabeus with his sons, not willing that the christian folk and holy persons should sustain ne bear any longer evil or pain, inspired with the Holy Ghost, he passed and sailed again over the high sea unto the Holy Land accompanied with the nobles and much commonalty of his realm; and when the ships were ready for to sail, S. Louis, beholding his three sons and specially dressing his words towards the eldest, said: 'Son, consider thou must, how as now I am farforth in age and that once I have passed over the sea, also how that the Queen thy mother is of great age proceeding nigh her last days, how now, blessed be God, we possess peaceably our realm, without any war, in delices, riches and honours, as much as pleaseth to us or appertaineth; look then that for the love of Jesu Christ and his church I ne spare mine old age, and have no pity of thy discomforted and woeful mother, but I leave both delices and honours, and expose mine own self to peril for Jesu Christ. Which things I will thou hear and know, to the end that when

thou comest to the succession of the realm thou do so.' The ships then ready, sailed on the sea so long that the host arrived at the haven of Carthage in Africa, where by force of arms the christian men took the castle, and enjoyed the land thereabout; and betwixt Tunis and Carthage they dressed their tents for to dwell there a little time. And in this meanwhile S. Louis after so many virtuous works, after so many pains and labours which he had suffered for the faith of Jesu Christ, God, that would benewrely consume his life for to yield to him fruit glorious for his labours and benefits, sent to him an axes continual. And then the holy enseignments or teachings, which before he had written in French, exposed diligently to Philip his eldest son and commanded that soon they should be accomplished. And then, he being though of sight and hearing whole, saying his seven psalms and calling on all the saints devoutly, took all the sacraments of the church, and at the last, he coming to the last hour, stretching his arms in manner of a cross, and proffering the last words: 'I commend my soul into thine hands,' died and passed unto our Lord, the year twelve hundred and seventy. The corpse of the glorious S. Louis was transported unto the sepulchre of his fathers and predecessors at S. Denis in France, there to be buried. In which place, also in divers others, this glorious saint resplendisseth of many miracles.

On that day that S. Louis was buried, a woman of the diocese of Sens recovered her sight, which she had lost and saw nothing, by the merits and prayers of the said debonair and meedful king. Not long

after, a young child of Burgundy both dumb and deaf of kind, coming with others to the sepulchre or grave of the saint, beseeching him of help, kneeling as he saw that the others did, and after a little while that he thus kneeled were his ears opened and heard, and his tongue redressed and spake well. In the same year a woman blind was led to the said sepulchre, and by the merits of the saint recovered her sight. Also that same year two men and five women, beseeching S. Louis of help, recovered the use of going, which they had lost by divers sickness and languors.

In the year that S. Louis was put or written in the catalogue of the holy confessors, many miracles worthy to be prised, befell in divers parts of the world at the invocation of him, by his merits and by his prayers. Another time at Evreux a child fell under the wheel of a water-mill. Great multitude of people came thither, and supposing to have kept him from drowning, invoked God, our Lady and his saints to help the said child, but our Lord willing his saint to be enhanced among so great multitude of people, was there heard a voice saying that the said child, named John, should be vowed unto S. Louis. He then, taken out of the water, was by his mother borne to the grave of the saint, and after her prayer done to S. Louis, her son began to sigh and was raised on life. It befell the same time in the diocese of Beauvais that ten men were broken within a quarry there, as they did fetch out great stones for to build withal, for on them fell a great quantity of earth insomuch that they were covered with it. A clerk then that passed there foreby heard their sigh-

ing, and having pity on them that were nigh dead, kneeled down to the earth, and remembering the new canonisation of the blessed S. Louis, sore weeping, made for the foresaid men his prayer to him, and after his prayer was done he saw folk coming that way. He called them, and forthwith they delved with such staves as they had, so much that by the merits of the saint to whom they trusted much, they had out of the quarry the foresaid ten men, the which were found unhurt, and as whole as ever they were before, howbeit that in certain they were dead.

It happed on another time that a great wall fell on a child which was reputed as dead by all the folk, his mother vowed him to the said saint, made the stones that covered him to be had away, and found her child laughing and whole of all his members. A woman aggrieved with a sickness which men call the fire of S. Anthony came to Poissy, thereas S. Louis was born, and before the font wherein the said saint was baptized, she kneeled, and sore weeping made her prayer there to God and to the saint, by the merits of whom her body was clean delivered from the foresaid sickness. Item two days after this, a worshipful man which of long time had been oppressed and beaten with sickness of feet, that he could not go ne stand without he had two crutches or staves under his arms, came unto the said font, made there his prayer, left his staves there, and home he returned as whole as ever he was. And yet sithe were there and are as now done many other miracles through the prayers and merits of S. Louis to the glory and praising of our Redeemer.

S. THOMAS AQUINAS

S. THOMAS AQUINAS, of the order of the friars preachers, was a right sovereign doctor, high and of noble lineage, which was born in the realm of Sicily.

He had the world and the vanity thereof in despite, and for to live in the more holy and clean life he entered into the order of the friars preachers. And after, he was drawn out thereof by his brethren and was closed up in a chamber in a tower two years. And because that by menaces ne fair words his brethren might not change his good purpose ne revoke it in no manner, they put in to his chamber a young damsel to the innocent child, for to subvert his good courage, and anon he took a brand of fire, and drove the damsel out of the chamber, which was come for to deceive him. And after that, he put him in humble prayers, devoutly beseeching our Lord that by his benign grace he would always maintain his chastity. Anon as he had made his prayers two angels in marvellous habit appeared to him, saying that his prayer was heard of God, and they distrained him by the reins, saying: 'Thomas, we be sent to thee by the commandment of God, and in his name we gird thee with the girdle of chastity, which shall never depart from thee, ne shall be broken.' The which gift was given to him of special grace, and so

kept him as long as he lived, as it appeared hereafter in his life. When he surmounted one of his adversaries with his ministers, his good mother considering and having mind of that which a holy hermit had told to her and shewed how he should be of the order of the friars preachers, she let him to be led to them peaceably, notwithstanding that tofore his brethren would have empeshed him of the entering in to the order and of his study. For when he was returned in to the order by consent of his good mother he began to study, which was as sweet to him as it is to the bee to make the honey; and like as of the bee the honey is multiplied, right so in like wise was by this glorious doctor the honey of holy scripture. Whereof he made marvellous books in theology, logic, philosophy natural and moral, upon the evangiles; in so much that the holy church throughout all the world of his holy science is replenished. And as he thus profited he was sent to Paris. Then his brethren, hearing that he should depart, anon came after him, saying that it appertained not that a child of so great lineage as he was should be in the order of mendicants ne of truants, and all to-rent his coat and cope, and would have taken him away from his good purpose. And when he was restored to the order to serve and give praising to our Lord, he set all his intent to study; for in thinking on God when he was in contemplation his thought was replenished with great joy. For many times were, as he was in a secret place and set all his intent in prayer, he was seen lifted up many times without aid of anything corporal. This

then is well a holy doctor, for thus as he set not his thought in this world, he set all his heart and his thought toward God, and was enhanced as he that had not had no flesh ne bone ne any weight. We read that when the blessed doctor desputed, read, or wrote, or argued, or did some other virtuous thing, [the first thing that he did was to pray to God,] and after when his prayer was past, anon he had in his mouth that which he should dispute or write as if he had tofore long studied in many books. All which things he shewed secretly to his fellow, named friar Reynold. To whom privily he shewed all his other secrets as long as he lived, and would that none other should know it, to the end that the vain glory of the world should not surprise him. For the science that he had was not of human study, but was of the administration divine by the prayers and service that he did to our Lord. This holy man is then as Moses was, which was given to the daughter of Pharaoh. For like as he was taken out of the sea and saved and rendered unto the said daughter, right so the blessed doctor, notwithstanding that he was born of the great lineage of the Earl of Aquin was by the purveyance of God rendered to his mother holy church, and cast out of the flood of this world, and enhanced and nourished by the paps and mammels of the scripture of holy church. And like as Moses made many marvellous signs tofore the children of Israel, in like wise hath this blessed doctor and his science and blessed doctrine in destroying errors always preached verity and truth, as his holy life witnesseth.

As on a night this glorious doctor was in his orisons and prayers, the blessed apostles Peter and Paul appeared to him and induced him in holy scripture, and especially of the prophecy of prophets.

This then is a holy doctor to whom the chancellor of heaven and the doctor of divine scripture have opened the gate; and he that was ravished to heaven hath shewed to him the secret of all the verity. And thus this blessed doctor is taken from the world and made burgess of heaven he being yet in the earth.

On another time as he was in the convent of his order at Naples, being in the church in devout prayers he was enhanced and lifted up from the ground the height of two cubits and more. Then a friar that saw him was much abashed and amarvelled, and after was heard a clear voice of the image of the crucifix tofore whom the holy man was turned and made his prayer, the which voice said unto him: 'O Thomas, thou hast written well of me, what reward wilt thou have for thy labour?' S. Thomas answered to him: 'Lord, I will none other reward but thyself.'

And as he was sent for of the Pope Gregory the tenth, he went by Champagne into the realm of Sicily; he began to be sick in such wise that he lost entirely his appetite. And in passing by the abbey called Fossenew of the order of the Cistercians, he was prayed greatly of the monks that it would please him to come to their abbey. His sickness began for to increase from day to day, and yet notwithstanding his malady he ceased not to sow and spread his holy doctrine of divine scripture

and sapience, and he was prayed of the monks for to expound to them the Canticles.

And that time it happed that in that monastery was seen a star three days tofore his death in manner of a sun, whereof they were abashed what it might signify; but certainly it signified that the holy man should depart out of this world within three days, and that appeared well, for when the holy man was dead the star was no more seen; and it was in the year of our Lord twelve hundred and seventy-four. And anon brother Reynold, his fellow, witnessed in truth, part saying and openly preaching in this wise; 'I, friar Reynold, have heard many times and now, the confession of this glorious doctor, and have always found him clean and net as a child of five years of age, for he never consented ne had will in mortal ne deadly sin.' And it is not to be forgotten what marvellous tokens were shewed when the blessed doctor should depart out of this world and of the entry of the perdurable felicity which was granted to him. For a friar, much devout, saw in the hour of his death the holy doctor reading in the school, and S. Paul entering into him. And S. Thomas demanded him if he had had good and true understanding in his epistles. Then S. Paul answered to him: 'Yea, as good as any creature living might have.' And above that S. Paul said to him: 'I will that thou come with me, and I shall lead thee to a place where thou shalt have of all things more clear understanding.' And it seemed to the friar that S. Paul drew S. Thomas out of the school by his cope. Then this friar began to cry, saying: 'Help,

brethren, for friar Thomas is taken from us'; and by the voice of this friar the other friars awoke and demanded that friar what he had. Then he told to them and expounded this said vision, and the friars made inquisition of the truth, and found that it was so as the friar had said, for in the same hour that the friar had so cried, the holy doctor departed out of this world. And like as he had had in divine sapience and science a doctor and teacher, right so in his passing he had a leader unto the glory perdurable. And long after that he was put in his sepulchre, the monks doubted that the holy corpse should have been taken away against their will, for the glorious doctor had commanded that his body should be borne to Naples, forasmuch as he was of that place. Wherefore the monks translated his body from one place to another, wherefore the prior of the abbey was in the night grievously reproved in a vision of S. Thomas. The prior, which doubted the judgment and sentence divine, commanded that the body of the Saint should be remised in the place that they had taken it from, and as soon as the sepulchre was opened there issued so great and sweet an odour that all the cloister was replenished therewith, and it seemed not that anybody had been buried there, but it seemed that there had been all manner of spices; which body they found all whole in all his members. The habit of his order, his cope, his scapulary and coat, were all without any evil corruption, and the odour of his precious body and his habit were sweet-smelling by evident witnesses seven years after that he was

translated; and the body was translated all whole.

We read also that there was a friar much devout, called brother Albert, which on a day was much devoutly in prayers tofore the altar of the Virgin Mary, and two reverend persons marvellously shining appeared to him. That one of those twain was in the habit of a bishop and the other in the habit of friars preachers, which had a crown on his head round beset with precious stones, and about his neck two collars, one of silver, the other of gold, and on his breast he had a great stone which of his brightness cast out many rays of clearness and illumined all the church; his cope that he had on was full of precious stones, his coat and scapulary were all shining of whiteness. When the friar saw this sight he marvelled much. Then he, that was in the habit of a bishop, said to him: 'I am Austin, that am sent to thee to the end that I may show the glory of brother Thomas Aquinas, which is in heaven in glory like unto me, but he precedeth me in the order of virginity, and I him in dignity pontifical.' Many other signs and miracles hath our Lord showed unto the honour and glory of his glorious saint, S. Thomas, whose merits be unto us aidant and helping. Amen.

S. FRANCIS.

FRANCIS, servant and friend of Almighty God, was born in the city of Assisi, and was made a merchant unto the twenty-fifth year of his age, and wasted his time by living vainly, whom our Lord corrected by the scourge of sickness, and suddenly changed him into another man. The old enemy the devil enforced him to let him of his holy purpose. But he was comforted of our Lord, which heard a voice saying to him: 'Francis, take the bitter things for the sweet, and despise thyself if thou desire to know me.'

On a time he met a leper, whom naturally men abhor, but he remembered him of the word that was said of God, and ran to him and kissed him, and anon the lazar vanished away; wherefore he went to the habitation of the lazars and kissed devoutly their hands, and gave to them money, and let them have no need of such as he might do.

On a time he entered into the church of S. Damian for to make his prayers, and the image of Jesu Christ spake unto him and said: 'Francis, go and repair my house which is all destroyed as thou seest.' And from that hour the soul of him liquefied, and the passion of Jesu Christ was marvellously infixed in his heart. And then he did great pain and was busy in repairing the church, and sold all that he had, and gave the money thereof to a priest; and he durst not

receive it for fear of his parents and kin. Then he, casting it away tofore the priest as dust, setting not thereby, wherefore he was taken of his father and bound, and he restored to him his money, and resigned also his clothes, and so naked he fled to our Lord, and clad him with hair. And then the blessed Francis went unto a simple man, whom he took instead of his father, and prayed him that like as his father doubled on him his curses, that in contrary he should bless him. His own brother germane seeing him in a winter time have on him but foul and few clothes, and that he trembled for cold and was entending to his prayers, said to his fellow: 'Go to Francis and say to him that he sell to thee a pennyworth of his sweat.' And when he heard it he answered with a glad cheer: 'I will sell it unto my Lord God.' On a day he heard in the church that which our Lord said to his disciples when he sent them to preach, and anon he addressed him with all his might to do and keep all those things; he did off his hoses and shoon from his feet and clad him with a foul coat, and took a cord for his girdle.

He went on a time in a snow by a wood, and was taken by thieves, and they demanded him what he was, and he said that he was the messenger of God, and anon they took him and cast him in the snow, saying to him: 'Lie there, thou villain messenger of God.'

Many noble and unnoble clerks and laymen had despised the world and begun to follow him, and the holy father enseigned and taught them the perfection of the gospel, which was for to be in poverty, and

that they should go by the way of simpleness. He wrote then a rule, after the gospel, to himself and his brethern, had and to be had, which Pope Innocent confirmed. And from then forthon he began to spread more ardently the seeds of the Word of God, and went about cities and castles by a fervent and marvellous desire.

There was a friar which seemed outward of marvellous holiness, and kept silence so straitly that he would not be shriven by words but by signs, and every man praised him as a saint. This holy man Francis came thither and said: 'Leave ye brethern to praise him, for I shall not yet praise him lest it be by feigntise of the devil; let him be warned to be shriven twice in the week by word and speaking, and if he do it not, this is but temptation of the devil and fraudelous deceit.' And then the friars warned him so to do, and he put his finger to his mouth, and shook his head, and showed that in no wise he would confess him. And anon after he returned again to worldly life as a hound to his vomit, and went out of his order, and finished his life in sinful acts and works.

On a time S. Francis was weary of going, and rode upon an ass, and his fellow, one Leonard of Assisi, was also weary of going, and S. Francis began to think thus and to say in himself: 'His kin and my kin were not like'; and incontinent he alighted down, and said to the friar: 'It appertaineth not to me to ride and thee to go afoot, for thou art more noble than I am.' And the friar was abashed, and kneeled down and required pardon.

On a time a poor labourer was almost lost in a

wood for thirst, and this holy saint impetred a fountain by his prayers. He said on a time to a friar, that was familiar with him, this secret which was showed to him by the Holy Ghost. 'There is a servant of God living in the world on this day, for whose sake, as long as he shall live, our Lord shall suffer no famine among the people.' But without doubt it is said that, when he was dead all that condition was changed to the contrary, for after his blessed death he appeared to the same friar and said to him: 'Lo! now is the famine come, which as long as I lived upon earth, our Lord would not suffer to come.'

On an Easter day the friars Greek that were in desert had laid their table more curiously than in another time, and had made ready the glasses and set them on the board. And when S. Francis saw that he anon withdrew him, and set on his head the hat of a poor man which was there, and bare his staff in his hand, and went out and abode at the gate. And when the friars ate at dinner, he cried at the door that they should give for the love of God an alms to a poor sick man. Then the poor man was called in and entered and sat down alone upon the earth, and set his dish in the dust, which when the friars saw they were abashed and were sore aghast. And he said to them: 'I see the table arrayed and adorned, and I know well that it is not for poor men that seek their meat from door to door.' He loved poverty in himself and in all others, so that he always called poverty his lady, but when he saw one more poor than himself he had thereof envy, and doubted to be overcome of him. On a day he saw a poor woman and he showed her to

his fellow and said: 'The poverty of this woman doth to us shame, and reproveth strongly our poverty, for, for my riches I have chosen my lady poverty, and she shineth more in this woman than in me.' When on a time a poor man passed tofore him, and the holy man was moved with inward compassion, his fellow said to him: 'Though this man be poor, peradventure there is not a richer of his will in all the province.' Then S. Francis said to him anon: 'Despoil thee of thy coat and give it to the poor man, and knowledge thyself culpable and kneel down to his feet'; to whom anon he obeyed and did so.

On a time as he came to the city of Arezzo, and a mortal battle was moved in the city, this holy man saw within the burgh, on the ground, the devils making joy and were glad. Then he called his fellow named Silvester, and said to him: 'Go to the gate of the city and command to these devils in God's name, that is Almighty, that they go out of the city.' Then he went hastily and cried strongly: 'All ye devils depart from hence in the name of God and by the commandment of Francis our Father.' And they went away, and then the citizens anon became to accord.

The foresaid Sylvester when he was yet a secular priest saw in his sleep a golden cross issue out of the mouth of S. Francis, of the which the over end touched heaven and the arms of the cross stretched forth from that one to that other part of the world. Then this priest had compunction and left the world, and followed perfectly this holy man Francis.

And on a time as this holy man was in prayer, the devil called him thrice by his own name, and when

the holy man had answered him, he said: 'None in this world is so great a sinner, but if he convert him our Lord would pardon him; but who that slayeth himself by hard penance shall never find mercy.' And anon this holy man knew by the revelation the fallacy and deceit of the fiend, how he would have withdrawn him for to do well. And when the devil saw that he might not prevail against him, he tempted him by grevious temptation of the flesh, and when this holy servant of God felt that, he despoiled him of his clothes and beat himself right hard with a hard cord, saying: 'Thus, brother ass, it behoveth thee to remain and to be beaten'; and when the temptation departed not, he went out and plunged himself in the snow all naked. And anon the devil departed from him all confused, and S. Francis returned again into his cell glorifying God.

And as he dwelled on a time with Leo the cardinal of S. Cross, in a night the devils came to him and beat him right grievously. Then he called his fellow and said to him: 'These be devils, jailers of our Lord, whom he sendeth to punish the excesses, but I can remember me of none offences that I have done, but by the mercy of God I have washed them away by satisfaction. But peradventure he hath sent me them because he will not suffer me to fall, because I dwell in the courts of great lords, which thing peradventure engendereth not good suspection to my right poor brethern, which suppose I abound in delices.' And early in the morning he arose and departed thence.

There was a friar which was fellow of S. Francis was on a time ravished, and saw in spirit the glorious

place in heaven, wherein he saw, among other seats, a right noble seat, shining of more noble glory than all the others. And as he marvelled for whom this noble seat was kept, he heard that it was said that this seat belonged sometime to one of the princes that fell, and is now made ready to the meek and humble Francis. And when S. Francis issued from his prayers, that friar demanded him: 'Father, what weenest thou of thyself?' And he said: 'I ween that I am greatest of all sinners.' And anon the spirit came into the heart of the friar and said: 'Behold what was the vision that thou sawest, for humility shall lift up the most meek man unto the seat lost by pride.'

This holy man S. Francis saw in a vision above him a seraphin crucified, the which emprinted in him the signs of his crucifying, that him seemed that he was crucified, and that in his hands, his feet and in his side him seemed were the sign of the wounds of the crucifying. But he did hide these tokens as much as he might, that no man should see them. And yet nevertheless some saw them in his life, and at his death they were seen of many, and were showed by many miracles that those signs were true. Of which miracles twain shall suffice for to be set here. There was a man named Rogier, and was in Apulia tofore the image of S. Francis, and began to think and say: 'May this be true that this man was so ennobled by such miracle, or was this an illusion or an invention dissimuled of his brethern the friars?' And as he thought this, he heard suddenly a sound like as a quarel had been shot out of an arbalaste or a cross-bow, and he felt him grievously hurt in his left hand,

but there appeared no hurt in his glove, and then he took off his glove, and saw in the palm of his hand a wound as it had been of an arrow, out of which wound there issued so great pain of ache and burning, that almost he died for sorrow and pain. And then he repented him, and said that he believed right verily the signs and tokens of S. Francis; and when he had prayed by two days S. Francis by his holy signs and stigmata, he was anon delivered of his pain and made all whole.

The two clerks, great luminaries of the world, that is to say S. Dominic and S. Francis, were in the city of Rome tofore the Lord Hostience, which afterward was pope of Rome. And this bishop said to them: 'Wherefore make ye not of your friars bishops and prelates, which should prevail more by teaching and example giving?' And there was long contention between them who should first answer, and humility overcame Francis that he would not speak tofore that other, and then S. Dominic humbly obeyed and said: 'Sire, our brethern be lifted up in good degree if they know it, and I shall never suffer to my power that ever they shall hope to have any higher dignity.' After that answered S. Francis: 'Sire, my brethern be called minors, because they would not be made greater.'

The blessed S. Francis full of right great simplicity admonished and warned all creatures to love their creator. He preached to birds and was heard of them, they suffered him to touch them, and without licence they would not return ne flee from him. And on a time when he preached, the swallows chittered and

sang, and anon by his commandment they were still. There was also, on a time, a bird on a fig-tree beside his cell which sang oft full sweetly. And S. Francis puts forth his hand and called that bird, and anon the bird obeyed and came upon his hand. And he said to her: 'Sing, my sister, and praise thy Lord,' and then anon she sang, and departed not till she had licence.

He spared to touch lights, lamps, and candles, because he would not defile them with his hands. He went honourably upon the stones for the worship of him that was called Stone. He gathered the small worms out of the way because they should not be trodden with the feet of them that passed by. He commanded in winter to give honey unto bees, that they should not perish for hunger. He called all beasts his brethern. He was replenished of marvellous joy for the love of his Creator. He beheld the sun, the moon, and the stars, and summoned them to the love of their Maker.

On a time, as S. Francis was sick on his eyen for continual weeping, his brethern said to him that he should refrain him from weeping, and he answered: 'The visitation of the light perdurable is not to be put away for the light that we have here with the flies.' And when his brethern constrained him to take a medicine for his eyen, and the surgeon held a burning iron in his hand, the blessed Francis said: 'My brother fire, be thou to me in this hour debonair and curable: I pray to our Lord that made thee, that thou attemper my heat.' And then he made the sign of the cross against the fire, and the fiery iron was

put in his tender flesh from his ear unto his eyelids, and he felt no pain.

He was strongly sick in the desert of S. Urban, and when he felt that nature failed in him he asked for to drink wine, and there was none. And they brought to him water, and he blessed it and made the sign of the cross thereon, and it was converted and turned into right good wine. And the holy man gat of our Lord that which the poverty of the desert might not get. And as soon as he had tasted it, he became strong and was all whole.

He had liefer hear blame of himself than praising, and for because that the people praised him anything of merit of holiness, he commanded to some brother to say to him in his ear some villainy in blaming him and defouling. And when such a brother, so constrained against his will, called him villain merchant, and unprofitable fool, then was he glad and blessed him, and said: 'God bless thee, for thou sayest right very true words, and this thing appertaineth to me for to hear.'

And this holy S. Francis would never be more master ne governor, but he would be more subject, ne so willingly command as obey. And therefore he left for to be general, and demanded to be under the warden, to whose will he always submitted himself in all things. He promised always obedience to the friar with whom he went, and kept it.

He went on a time by the morass of Venice and found there a great multitude of birds singing, and he said to his fellows: 'Our sisters, these birds, give laud to their Maker; let us go in the middle of them,

and sing we our hours canonical to our Lord.' And they entered in among them and they moved not, but because they might not hear each other for the chittering and noise of birds he said: 'My sister birds, cease your songs till we have yielded unto our Lord due praisings.' And then they held them still, and when they had finished their lauds, he gave to them licence to sing again, and anon they reprised their song after their custom.

On a time when he preached at the castle Almarye, and he might not be heard for the swallows which made their nests, to whom he said: 'My sister swallows, it is time that I speak, for ye have said enough; be ye now still till the word of God be accomplished.' And they obeyed and were still anon.

He was on a time harboured with a knight, and S. Francis said to him: 'Brother, fair host, agree to that I shall say to thee; confess thy sins, for thou shalt soon eat in another place.' And anon he granted that to him, and ordained for his meiny, and took penance of health. And also soon as they went to the table the host died suddenly.

And as this holy man S. Francis passed through Apulia, he found in his way a purse full of money, and when his fellow saw it, they would have taken it for to have given it to the poor people, but he would not suffer him in no manner, and said to him: 'Son, it appertaineth not to thee to take the goods of others.' And when his fellow hasted to take it S. Francis prayed a little, and after, commanded him to take the purse, which then found therein a great adder, instead of money. And when the friar saw that he began to

doubt, but he would obey and took the purse in his hands, and there sprang out anon a serpent venomous. And then S. Francis said to him: 'Money is none other thing to the servant of God but the devil, which is a serpent venomous.'

There was a friar grievously tempted, and he began to think that if he had anything written with the hand of their father S. Francis, that that temptation should be chased away anon, but he durst in no wise discover this thing. On a time S. Francis called him and said: 'Son, bring to me parchment and ink, for I will write something praising to God.' And when he had written he said: 'Take this charter and keep it unto the day of thy death diligently'; and anon all this temptation went away. And the same friar, when S. Francis lay sick, began to think: 'Our father approacheth the death, and if I might have, after his death, his coat I should be greatly comforted.' And after this the saint called him and said: 'I give to thee this my coat; if thou have thereto, after my death, plain right.' He would also that right great reverence should be done to the hands of priests, to whom was given power to sacre the blessed sacrament of our Lord. And then he said oft: 'If it happed me to meet any saint coming from heaven, and also a poor priest, I would first go kiss the priest's hands, and would say to the saint: Holy saint, abide a while, for the hands of this priest have handled the son of life, and hath performed a thing above humanity.'

He was ennobled in his life by many miracles, for the bread that was brought to him to bless gave health to many sick men. He converted the water

into wine, of which a sick man anon tasted and received anon health, and also did many other miracles. And when his last days approached, and he was grieved by long infirmity, then he made himself to be laid upon the bare ground, and did do call all the friars that were there, and when they were all present he blessed them. And like as our Lord fed his disciples at supper on Shere-Thursday, he gave to each of them a morsel of bread, and warned them, as he was wont to do, to give laud to their Maker. And the very death which is to all men horrible and hateful he admonished them to praise it; and also he warned and admonished death to come to him, and said: 'Death, my sister, welcome be thou'; and when he came at the last hour he slept in our Lord. Of whom a friar saw the soul in the manner of a star, like to the moon in quantity and to the sun in clearness.

There was a friar named Augustin, which was minister and servant in the Labour of the Earth, and as he was in his last end, and had lost his speech, he escried suddenly and said: 'Abide me, father, abide, I shall go with thee.' Then the friars demanded him what he said, and he said: 'See ye not our father Francis that goeth unto heaven?' and anon he slept in peace, and followed his holy father.

S. CLARE

THERE was a marvellous holy woman in the city of Assisi, which was named Clare. First ye shall understand that her nativity was much worthy and noble: as touching the world she was of right noble lineage. Secondly, is found in her life and known great plenty of virtues. It is read that this holy virgin, after the time of her infancy, was so composed in all good manners, in port, in maintenance, and in continuance, that all others might take of her fair and good ensample for to maintain and govern them. And in especial she had so great pity of the poor people, that ofttimes she spared her own mouth and sent by secret messengers such as she should herself have been sustained by. Also in making devout prayer she had so great pleasure that oftimes it seemed to her, being in orisons, that her spirit was refreshed with the sweetness of heaven. She was in her array like others, but by penance she chastised her body, for how well that for the honour of her friends she was nobly apparelled, yet nevertheless she ware always the hair on her bare body, and from her infancy her heart had determined that for to die she would never have other espouse than Jesu Christ. And many other and plenty of virtues shone in her, the which were overlong to recount. Thirdly, how S. Francis showed to her the way of

truth; it is read that as soon as S. Clare heard the renomee of S. Francis—it was spread over all the world as it were a new man sent into the world, showing how we ought to follow the new way of Jesu Christ—she never might have rest in her heart till she was come to him, and that to him she had opened her heart. Then after she had sweetly understood him, and had received of him many a holy, sweet, and angelic word, S. Francis exhorted her above all other things to flee the world both with heart and her body. And to this he enjoined her that on Palm Sunday she should hallow the feast with the other people, but the night following, in remembrance of the passion of Jesu Christ, she should turn her joy into weeping and afflictions, for in such wise to weep the passion of Jesu Christ, finally she might come to heaven as virgin and espouse of God, well eurous and happy. Fourthly, how she had no quietness in her heart till she had accomplished her thought and purpose; it is read that S. Clare, thus informed of S. Francis, could have no rest in her heart till that, the night assigned and the hour, she issued out of the city of Assisi, in which she dwelled, and came to the church of our Lady of Portiuncula. And there the friars received her, which awoke in the said church, and abode for her tofore the altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And there her hair was cut off, and after, they led her into an abbey of nuns and there left her. Fifthly, how her friends despised this work ordained by our Lord; it is read when this lady was thus ordained, she laboured and did so much

that she drew her sister named Agnes into her company; wherefore as well for that one as for that other, the carnal friends of S. Clare had her in indignation out of measure, wherefore S. Francis translated them into the church of S. Damian, which church by the commandment of the crucifix he had repaired. And there this lady began the religion that was called of Poor Sisters, and there she was inclosed in a little cell which S. Francis had edified. Sixthly, how she had humility in her heart; it is read that S. Clare glorified herself sovereignly in humility, like as the wise man saith: 'Of so much that a creature is promoted, of so much ought he to be the more humble.' Therefore, after that she had assembled a great convent of holy virgins; unnethe and with great pain, if it had not been for the obedience of S. Francis, she had never received the sovereignty of them. And after that she had received the domination over them and governance, she was tofore all other ready to serve them that were sick, as she had been a handmaid or servant, and was so humble that she would wash the feet of her hand-maidens and servants when they came from without from their work, and dried them and kissed them. Seventhly, how S. Clare kept poverty; it is read that for to keep and to follow poverty after the gospel of Jesu Christ, S. Clare put thereto all her entent, wherefore sith the beginning of her holy life, all that ever that came to her of father and mother, she sold and gave it for God's sake, insomuch that for her ne for her sisters she had but simple feeding and clothing, ne would have none other. And not-

withstanding that she was assoiled of the pope of the vow of poverty, and thereupon had received letters of the pope, much suddenly weeping, she wrote again saying: 'I will well be assoiled of my sins, but the vow of poverty I shall keep unto the death.' The eighth, how in necessity Jesu Christ visited her; it is read that, on a time that at the hour of dinner in the college of S. Clare was but one loaf of bread, ne there might no more be had. Then S. Clare took this loaf of the hand of the dispenser, and made then her prayer, and after, of that loaf made as many loaves and parts as there were sisters. And as soon as every each had received her part, how well it was but little, the divine grace multiplied it so much that every each left some and had enough. Ninthly, how in straitness S. Clare was ruled; this holy lady was content with one poor coat lined with a mantlet; she used never pendants ne furs of skins. Thrice in the week she fasted in this manner that she never tasted thing that was sodden. Item, every year she fasted two Lentens to bread and water only, save the Sunday she took a little wine. And shortly, she lived so straitly that she became so feeble that S. Francis commanded her by virtue of obedience that she should fail no day but that she should take for her refection an ounce and a half of bread. She was never without hair next her flesh, and for a pillow, she took a block or a great stone; she lay always on the bare ground, or for to take the better her rest she lay otherwhile upon the cuttings of vines, unto the time that S. Francis had commanded her, because that it

was over foul, that she should use to lie on a sack full of straw. Tenthly, how she hath despised the iniquity of the fiend our enemy; it is read that in especial she had a custom that from mid-day she was in prayers and remembering the passion and sufferance of Jesu Christ, two hours during, and after the eventide she was always a long while in orisons. And it is read that ofttimes the fiend appeared to her by night saying: 'If so be that ye abstain you not from waking and weeping, ye shall for certain be blind.' And she answered: 'He shall not be blind that shall see our Lord in his glory.' And when the fiend heard this answer, anon he departed all confused, ne durst never after tempt her ne let her of her prayers. Eleventhly, God of his grace had pierced her heart; it is read that S. Clare for to dispend amorously the time that God had lent her, in especial she was determined that from the hour of mid-day unto evensong time, she would dispend all that time in thinking and beweeping the passion of Jesu Christ, and say prayers and orisons according thereto, after unto the five wounds of the precious body of Jesu Christ, as smitten and pierced to the heart with the dart of the love divine. It is read that from the time on a Shere-Thursday, the hour of the maundy, unto Easter even the Saturday, she was remembering and thinking on the sufferance of our Lord Jesu Christ so burningly, that she was ravished as all drunken in the love of God, that she knew not what was said ne done about her, but as unmovable or as all insensible, in standing she held her eyes

fixed in one place. Twelfthly, how in her disease and pain she was of God comforted; it is said that she was by the space of eight and twenty days in continual languor and sickness, nevertheless was never seen in her sign of impatience, but always sweet words and amiable in praising and thanking God of all. And in especial it is read that, in the sickness in which she passed toward the end of her life she was seventeen days without meat or drink. And nevertheless she was so sweetly visited of God that it seemed unto all them that saw her that she had no pain ne disease, but yet more every creature that came to her was comforted in God. And in especial it is read that, when the hour of death approached, she, which long time had lost her speech, began to speak and say: 'Go out surely, thou hast a good safe-conduct.' And when one of her sisters, being there present, heard that, she demanded her to whom she spake. And she answered: 'To my soul, whom I see abashed to depart from my body, for he ought not for to doubt, for I see the holy Virgin Mary which abideth for me.' And this said, our blessed Lady entered into the chamber where S. Clare lay. And she was crowned with a crown right clear shining, that the obscurity of the night was changed into clearness of mid-day. And she brought with her a right great multitude of other virgins all nobly crowned, among whom there was one that bare a rich mantle, to whom she said: 'Give hither the mantle.' And when she had sweetly embraced her she clad her with the mantle. And at that same

time was weeping about her the college of sisters, and in especial Agnes the sister of S. Clare, making great moan and sorrow. Then S. Clare said sweetly: 'My sisters, discomfort you not, for ye shall have unto God of me a good and a true advocate. And thou, Agnes, shalt soon after follow me into glory.'

Now it is well reason and right that we say and show of the great marvels that God showed for S. Clare by her holy prayers, for she was veritable, true, and worthy of all honour. That great tempest that was in the time of Frederick the emperor, whereof holy church had so much to suffer, that in divers parts of the world was much war, so that by the commandment of the emperor were battles established of knights, and with that so many archers of Saracens as they had been hills of flies for to destroy the people, castles and cities. The Saracens ran as wood men till they came to the gates of Assisi. And the felon Saracens, that be full of all cruelty and falsehood, and seek nothing but for to slay and destroy christien men's blood, and they came unto the cloister of the poor ladies of S. Damian, and the holy ladies had so great fear that their hearts melted in their bodies, and ran weeping to their mother S. Clare. And she that was sick, without fear of heart, made her to be led tofore her enemies unto the door, and did do bear tofore the body of our Lord, the which was in a pix much richly garnished and devoutly. And this holy lady was on her knees, saying with weeping tears unto our Lord: 'Ah! fair Lord God, please it you then that they that serve you, and be disarmed,

whom I nourish for your love, be brought into the hands and power of the paynims? Fair sweet Lord, I beseech thee that thou keep thy handmaidens and servants; for I may not keep them in this point.' And our Lord anon sent of his special grace a voice as it had been a child, which said to her: 'I shall keep you always.' 'O sweet fair Lord, keep this city if it please you, which hath given to us such things as hath been needful to us, for the love of you.' And he answered: 'The city shall have some grievance, but nevertheless I shall keep and defend it.' Then this holy virgin S. Clare arose from her prayer, which had yet her visage all bewept, and comforted much sweetly her sisters that wept, and said to them: 'I command you fair daughters that ye comfort you in good faith, and trust ye only in our Lord, for the Saracens shall never do you harm.' Anon then the Saracens had so great dread and fear, that over the walls, and by those places that they had entered, they fled hastily; and were in this wise by the orison and prayer of S. Clare destroubled and put from their emprise. Then commanded she to all them that heard the voice that in no manner they should discover ne tell it to any that lived.

On another time it happed that an old squire, full of vain glory, the which was much hardy in battle and was captain of a great host, which Frederick had delivered to him, and came with all his host for to take the city of Assisi, he did do hew down the trees, and destroy the country all about, and besieged the city, and sware that he would not depart thence till he had taken the city, and thus was the

city besieged for to have been taken. And when S. Clare, the handmaid of Jesu Christ, heard the tidings, she had great pity and did do call her sisters and said to them: 'Right sweet daughters, we receive daily many benefits of this city, and it should be a great unkindness in us if we succoured it not in this great need as much as we may.' Then commanded she to bring ashes, and said to her sisters that they should discover their heads, and she herself first cast great plenty of ashes upon her head, and after, upon the heads of all the others, and said to them: 'Now go, fair daughters, and with all your hearts require and pray ye to our Lord that he will deliver this city.' And then every each by themselves, in great weepings and tears, made their orisons and prayers devoutly to our Lord, in such wise that he kept and defended the city, that on the morn the host departed out of the country, and it was not long after that they all were dead and slain.

It should not be according that we should hele and keep secret the marvellous virtue of her prayer, by the which at the beginning of her conversion she converted a soul to God. For she had a sister younger than herself was, whose conversation she much desired, and in all her prayers that she made she prayed at the beginning with all her heart to our Lord that like as she and her sister had been in the world of one heart and of one will, that it might please the Father of mercy that Agnes, her sister, whom she had left in the world, might despise the world, and savour the sweetness of God, so that she might have no will to marry her, save only to God

her true friend, in such wise that between them both they might espouse their virginity to our Lord. These two sisters loved marvellously together, and were much sorrowful of their departing, and that one more than that other. But our Lord granted unto S. Clare the first gift that she demanded, for it was a thing that much pleased him. After the seventh day that S. Clare was converted, Agnes, her sister, came to her and discovered her secretness to her and will, and said utterly that she would serve God. And when S. Clare heard that, anon she embraced her, and said for joy that she had: 'My sister, ye be right welcome, I thank God that hath heard me for thee, for whom I was in great sorrow.' Howbeit that this conversion was marvellous, and yet more to be wondered how Clare defended her sister by her prayers. At that time were the good blessed sisters at S. Michael of Pambo, which were joined to God, and they followed the life and works of Jesu Christ. And there was S. Clare, which felt more of God than the other, and she informed her sister, her nurse, how she should rule her. And the parents and kinsmen of S. Clare began a new battle and strife against the virgins. For when they heard say that Agnes was gone to dwell with her sister S. Clare, there came on the morn to the place where S. Clare dwelled, twelve of her kinsmen and friends all from themselves, all araged, and showed not withoutforth the malice that they had in their hearts, but gave them to understand that they came for good. And when they came within they made no force of S. Clare for to draw her out, for they

knew well that they should nothing exploit of their intent, but they turned to Agnes and said to her: 'What makest thou here? Come out with us home to thy house.' And she answered, that she would never depart from the company of S. Clare. And a tyrant, a knight, took and drew her by the hair, and the other took her by the arms, and carried her forth afar. And she, which seemed that she was among the hands of a lion, and taken from the hands of God, began to cry and said: 'Fair dear sister! help me, and suffer not that I be taken from the only company of Jesu Christ.' But the felons drew this virgin against her will over the mountain, and rent her clothes and drew and rased out her hair. And the holy sweet virgin S. Clare kneeled down, and put herself to prayer, and prayed our Lord to give her sister a strong heart and a stable, and that she might by the puissance of God overcome and surmount the puissance of the people. And anon the Holy Ghost made her so pesant and heavy, that it seemed that her body were fixed to the ground, in such wise that for all the force and power that they could do they might not bear her over a little brook. And the men that were in the fields and river came for to help them, but they might never remove her from the earth. And then one of them said in mocking: 'It is no wonder though she be heavy, for she hath eaten much lead.' Then the lord Mouvalt, her uncle, lift up his arm for to beat her cruelly, but an ache and pain took him suddenly, and tormented him a long time right

cruelly. After that this said Agnes had suffered this long wrestling of her kinsmen and friends, came S. Clare and prayed them for God's sake they should leave this battle with her sister, and go their way and take heed of themselves. And she received the cure and charge of Agnes, her sister, which lay there on the ground in great disease, and finally her kinsmen departed in great anguish and sorrow of heart. And then anon after, she arose up much gladly, and had much great joy of that first battle that she had suffered for the love of Jesu Christ, and from this time forward she ordained herself to serve God perdurably. And S. Francis cut off her hair with his own hands, and induced and taught her to serve God, and so did S. Clare her sister. And because we may not shortly account with few words the great perfection of the life of Agnes, therefore we shall entend unto the life of S. Clare the virgin.

Was it not great marvel of the orisons and prayers of S. Clare, which were so strong, and so much availed against the malice of the people, when they fled and were puissant to burn the devils? It happed on a time that a much devout woman of the bishopric of Pisa, came to one of the ladies for to yield thankings to God and S. Clare which had delivered her from the hands of five devils. For they fled, and wailed that the orisons of S. Clare burnt them all, and therefore they might no longer dwell in that place. The pope Gregory had much great faith and great devotion in the prayers of that holy virgin, and not without cause, for he had proved and felt certain virtue thereof, which had

holpen many and divers that had necessity and need. And when he was bishop of Hostence and after when he was pope, he sent his letters to her by which he required her to pray for him, and anon he felt eased and alleged by her prayers. Then certainly if he which was vicar of Jesu Christ, by his humility, as we may see, had so great devotion to S. Clare, of whom he required her aid, and recommended him to the virtue of her orisons, as well ought we then to ensue with all our power the devotion of such a man. For he knew well how much love is mighty and how the pure virgins have delivered entry into the door of the heart of our Lord. And if our sweet Lord give himself to them that love him firmly, what may he deny to them for whom they require him devoutly? Always seen that they require of him that is needful and behoveful.

Her holy work showeth well the great faith and the great devotion that she had in the holy sacrament of the altar. For, in that great malady which had so vexed her that she lay in her bed, she arose and did her to be borne from one place to another, and did spin a fine small cloth of which she made more than fifty corporals, and sent them in fair towels of silk into divers churches in divers places of Assisi. When she should receive the body of our Lord, it was marvel to see the tears that she wept, of which she was all wet. And she had so great fear when she approached nigh unto her Saviour, that she ne doubted him no less which is in semblance very God in the form of bread, the

sacrament, than him that governeth heaven and earth, which is all one. Thus as she had always souvenance and mind of Jesu Christ in her good health, so God comforted her and visited her in her infirmity and languor. In the hour of the nativity of Jesu Christ at Christmas, when the angels and the world made feast and sung and enjoyed of little Jesus that was born, all the poor ladies went to matins into their monastery, and left alone their poor mother sore grieved in her malady. Then she began to think on little Jesus, and was sorrowful that she might not be at the service, and praise our Lord, and said in sighing: 'Fair Lord God, I wake here alone.' And anon she began to hear the friars that sang, and S. Francis, and heard well the jubilation, the psalmody, and the great melody of the song, howbeit her bed was not so nigh that the voice of a man ne of a woman might not be heard ne understood if God did it not by his courtesy, or if God had not given to her, above all nature of man, force and power to hear it. On the morning, when the ladies, her daughters, came to her, she said to them: 'Blessed be our Lord Jesu Christ, for when ye left me, he left me not truly; and I say to you that I have heard this night all the service and solemnity that hath been done in the church by S. Francis, through the grace of Jesu Christ.'

At the pains of her death our Lord comforted her always. For she drew out of the holy wounds of Jesu Christ a bitterness, of which her heart, her will, and her thought were full of anguishes, marvellously bitter, and often as she had been drunken of the

sorrow and tears that she wept for the love of Jesu Christ. For ofttimes the love of God which she had imprinted in her heart withinforth she made to appear by signs outward. She informed and taught the novices, and admonished them that they have in their mind the sorrow and pain of the death of Jesu Christ.

It happed on a time on the holy Shere-Thursday, which is the day when our Lord made his maundy or supper, whereas is remembered how God loved unto the end his disciples, about the hour of even, when God began the wrestling of his passion, then S. Clare being heavy and sorrowful, enclosed her in the chamber of her cell. And it happed that she prayed God long, and was sorrowful unto the death, and in that sorrow and heaviness she drew a fervent love full of desire; for she remembered how Jesus in that hour was taken, estrained, haled forth and mocked, insomuch that of this remembrance she was all drunken, and sat in her bed. All that night she was so ravished and on the morn, that she wist not where her body was. The eyes of her head looked steadfastly in one place, without moving or looking aside, and the eye of her heart was so fixed in Jesu Christ that she felt nothing. One of her daughters, more familiar and secret with her than other, went oft to her for to see her, and always she found her in one point. The night of the Saturday, this good devout daughter brought a candle burning, and without speaking made a sign to her blessed mother Clare that she should remember the commandments of S. Francis; for he had commanded that every day

she should eat somewhat. Then as she stood tofore her with a candle burning, S. Clare came again to her estate, and her seemed she was come from another world. And she said: 'Fair daughter, what need is of a candle, is it not yet day?' And she answered: 'Right, dear fair mother, the night is passed and the day is gone, and that other night is come.' 'Fair daughter,' said S. Clare, 'this sleep that I have made be blessed, for I have much desired it, and God hath given to me; but beware that thou say it never to creature as long as I live.'

When our Lord knew and apperceived how well and how much this holy Clare loved him, and the right great love that she had to the very cross for the love of him, he so illumined and privileged her in such manner that she had power to make tokens and miracles by the cross. For when she made the sign of the very cross upon them that were sick, anon the malady fled away. And so many miracles God showed for her of which I shall tell you some. First, of a friar that was out of his wit. On a time it happed S. Francis sent to S. Clare a friar named Steven, and was all mad from himself, that she should make upon him the sign of the cross. For he knew well that she was a woman of great perfection, and he honoured her much for the virtue that was in her. And she, that was obeissant and good daughter of obedience, blessed the friar by the commandment of S. Francis, and made him to sleep a little, and after, she took him by the hand and he arose all whole, and went to S. Francis clean delivered of all his malady.

This blessed S. Clare was a good mistress and true for to inform young people that knew but little of religion, and she was president and upperest of the maidens of our Lord, and informed them in good customs. She nourished them by so great love that unnethe any tongue may express; she taught them privily to flee all noise of the world, because they should join to our Lord, and also she exhorted them that they should put from them all carnal affection and fleshly love of their friends, and that they should not be over tender over them ne love them over much, ne houses, ne land; but make them strong to please and serve God. She counselled them and warned them that they should hate to do the will of the body, and that the delights and fleshly desires of the flesh they should with all their heart and good reason go thereagainst. She said to them the fiend of hell lieth in await and layeth his hooks and ginnes subtilly for to take and bind the holy souls, and yet they tempt more the good people than them of the world. She would that they should work and labour with their proper hands in such works as she had established to them. She would that when they had done their bodily travail they should go to prayer, for prayer is a thing that pleaseth much God. And she would that in praying they should rechaufe their bodies, and that they should leave and depress negligence and all coldness of heart, and be kindled and lighted in the holy love of God, so that instead of coldness they should be hot in devotion. In no place ne in no cloister was silence better kept ne holden, there was no lavas in their speech ne evil,

but they were sober and so good that they showed well that in their hearts was none evil but all goodness: the good mistress S. Clare herself spake so little that she restrained them.

On a time it happed that the pope Gregory defended that no friar should go to the house of the ladies without his leave. And when the holy mother S. Clare knew that, she had much sorrow in her heart, because she saw well she might not have that which was needful, which was the nurture of Holy Scripture, and said to her sisters with a sorrowful heart: 'Now forthon well may the pope Gregory take from us all the friars, when he hath taken from us them that nourished our souls with the Word of God.' And anon she sent again all the friars of her house to the master or minister, for she said she had nothing to do to have friars to get them bodily bread, when they failed them that nourished her and her sisters with the Word of God. Anon as the pope Gregory heard this tiding he repealed that which he had defended, and set all at the will of God. This holy and good abbess loved not only the souls of her good daughters, but thought well in her heart oft-times how she might serve their bodies most charitably. For when it was right cold she covered by night them that were feeble, and visited them much sweetly. And if she saw any trouble by any temptation or by any anger, which happeth sometimes, she would call them secretly and comforted them, all weeping. And other while she would fall down to the feet of her daughters that were mat and heavy, and kneeled tofore them, so that by the

sweetness and debonairty that the ladies saw in their good mother, that she alleged and took away their sorrow, whereof the ladies, her daughters, couthe her much thanks. And thus learned they do well by devotion and to love their good mother more sweetly, and followed by the right way the works of their abbess. And they marvelled much of the great abundance of holiness that God had given to his spouse.

When she had been forty years in the state of right holy poverty it pleased to our Lord to call her to be rewarded in heaven, and sent to her a great malady, and multiplied her languor and sickness. She had sometime done so sharp penance that her body ne her flesh had no strength. And at the last she was over sick and much more than she was wont to be, for as our Lord had given to her in her health, riches of merits, of good virtues and of good works, right so would God enrich her in her sickness, to the end that she would suffer for him great pain and torments, for in suffering of sickness is virtue perfect. How and in what wise she was virtuous in her malady and perfect, ye may hear. For howbeit that she had been eight and twenty years in langour and malady, yet never she grudged, ne murmured, ne plained, but always said holy words and rendered thankings to our Lord, howbeit that she was marvellously aggrieved and sick, so that it seemed that she hasted much to draw to her end.

It pleased nevertheless to our Lord that he respited her from the death unto the time that her end might be honoured, and enhanced her by the presence of the pope and of the cardinals, to whom she was

especial daughter. For when the pope and the cardinals had abode a great while at Lyons, S. Clare was then marvellously destrained by sickness, so that her daughters had great sorrow at their hearts that them seemed that a glaive had pierced them, or that they had been riven with a sword. But our Lord showed anon a vision to one, his handmaid, which dwelled at St Paul's, for it seemed to her that she and her sisters were at S. Damian's tofore S. Clare, which was right sick. And her seemed that this Clare lay in a much fair bed and much precious, and her seemed that her daughters wept when the soul should pass out of the body. And anon she saw a right fair lady at the head of the bed, and said to them that wept: 'Fair daughters, weep no more, for this lady shall overcome all. And know ye that she shall not die till that our Lord and his disciples shall come. And she shall not abide long after that the pope and the court of Rome shall come to Perugia.' And anon as the Bishop of Hostence heard say that this holy woman was sick, anon in great haste he went to see and visit the spouse of Jesu Christ, for he was her ghostly father, and had the cure of her soul, and nourished her with pure heart and will, for he had always devoutly loved the holy virgin. And then he gave to her in her malady the body of our Lord, for that is the very feeding of the soul, and he comforted the other daughters by his sermons and holy words. Then the holy good mother, weeping, prayed him much sweetly that he would take heed of her daughters there being, and of all the others, and that for the love of our Lord he

would remember her. And above all other things she prayed him that he would do so much that her privilege of poverty might be confirmed of the pope and of the cardinals. And he that loved verily her and the religion, and that had always truly aided her, promised that he should do, and did it.

In the year after came the pope and the cardinals to Assisi for to see the departing of the holy virgin, and to put to effect the vision that had been seen and signified of her. For the pope is the highest man in earth under God, and that best representeth the person of Jesu Christ; for like as our Lord had his disciples which were joined to him in earth, in like wise the pope hath his cardinals, the which be joined to him in the holy church. Our Lord God hasted him, as he that knew the firm purpose of his spouse S. Clare, and hasted for to honour her, and to set in the palace of the king of paradise his poor pilgrim; and the good lady also coveted and wished with all her heart that she might be delivered of her mortal body, and that she might see in heaven Jesu Christ as she that had ensued him in the earth with all her heart in very poverty. Her members were bruised and troubled by great sickness that the body might not endure, for it was over much enfeebled, so that our Lord called her from this world, and ordained for her health perdurable. Then pope Innocent the Fourth and the cardinals came with him for to visit the handmaid of God, of whom he had better proved the holy life than of any woman that was in his time. And therefore he knew certainly that it was reason that he should come and

honour her with his presence. And when he came into the house of the ladies, he went thither whereas this holy saint lay, and took to her his hand for to kiss. And the pope, which was courteous, stood upon a tree and took to her his foot to kiss by great humility. And she took it and kissed it much sweetly, and after inclined herself to the pope much humbly, and required him with a sweet cheer that he would assoil her of all her sins. To whom he said: 'Would God that we had no more need of absolution of sins that we have done than ye have.' And then he assoiled her of all her sins and gave to her largely his benediction. And when they were all departed, forasmuch as she had received that day, by the hands of the minister provincial, the very body of our Lord, she lift up her eyes to our Lord to heaven, and joined her hands together and said then: 'Ah! my right sweet and fair daughters, our Lord Jesu Christ by his debonairty hath done to me so great good, and given to me so great a gift that heaven ne earth may not know, for I have received this day a much high Lord and also have seen his vicar.' The good daughters were about the bed, which wept and abode for the orphans whereof they had great sorrow in their hearts, for the death of their mother pierced their hearts like as it were a sword. Which daughters departed not from her ne for hunger, ne for thirst, ne for no sleep, ne they thought neither of bed ne of table. All the delights that they had was for to cry, to weep and to make sorrow. And among all the others her sister, which was a much devout virgin, wept many tears and said to S. Clare her sister:

'Fair and right sweet sister, depart not away from me and leave me not here alone.' And S. Clare answered to her much sweetly: 'Fair sweet sister, it pleaseth to God that I depart from this world, but weep no more, fair sister, for ye shall come hastily to our Lord after me. And also I say you that our Lord shall do to you great comfort and consolation tofore or ye die.' Then she turned her and said to her daughters: 'Sweet daughters, I recommend to you the holy poverty of our Lord, and give ye to him thankings for that he hath done to you.' Then she blessed all them that had devotion to her and to her order, and gave largely and wisely her blessing to all the poor ladies of her order that were tofore her there. The two fellows of S. Francis that were there, of whom that one was named Angel, comforted them that were full of sorrow, and that other friar kissed devoutly and holily the bed of her that should pass to our Lord. The holy ladies sorrowed much the loss of their mother, and as much more as they cried and wept withoutforth, so much more were they ardently grieved withinforth. Then S. Clare began to speak to her soul all softly: 'Go,' said she; 'go surely, for thou hast a good guide and conductor in the way whereas thou shalt go, which shall lead thee well the right way. Go!' said she hardily; 'for he that made thee and sanctified thee shall keep thee, for he loveth thee also tenderly as the mother doth her child. Lord God,' said she, 'blessed be thou that madest me.' And then one of her sisters demanded her to whom she spake. 'I have,' said she, 'spoken to my blessed soul, and without

fail her glorious conductor is not far from her.' Then she called one of her daughters and said to her: 'Fair daughter, seest thou the king of glory whom I see?' But the daughter saw him not, for the will of God was that one should see that another saw not; for there was a happy widow and comfortable which saw him with the eyes of her head among the tears that she wept, and yet nevertheless she was wounded to the heart with a dart full of sweetness and of sorrow. Then she turned her sight toward the door of the house and saw a great company of virgins enter into the house all clad with white clothes, and each of them bare a crown of gold on her head. And among all other, there was one much more clear and fairer than the others which bare a crown of gold windowed, out whereof issued a right great clearness, that all the house was so clearly light, that it seemed the night to be clear day. And this lady that was so clear approached to the bed whereas the spouse of her son lay, and she inclined upon her and embraced her much sweetly. Then the virgins brought a mantle of right great beauty, and the virgins enforced them to serve and to cover the body of S. Clare and well to make ready the house. And on the morn was the feast of S. Laurence, and then died and departed out of this mortal life the holy lady and friend of our Lord, and anon the soul of her was crowned in everlasting joy. Ah! sweet virgin, pray thou to Jesu Christ for us, for thou wert the first flower of the holy poor ladies which hast drawn to penance without number, that thou mayst conduct us to the life permanable. Amen.

NOTES

CAXTON'S INTRODUCTION

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15. 1. Jerome, Saint and Doctor of the Church, a Dalmatian, lived from about A.D. 340 to 420. In pictures he is usually shown as an ascetic-looking hermit: a Cardinal's hat and a lion are often his attributes.

4. Austin or Augustine, also a Saint and Doctor, a native of Numidia, born 354, died 430. Till middle life he was an eager student, but at the same time a slave to sensual sins, the unworthiness and guilt of which he felt while yet he could not shake himself free. His mother's prayers, his study of S. Paul's epistles, the preaching of S. Ambrose at Milan, and other Christian influences effected his complete conversion. He became a zealous bishop and profound theologian. His greatest work is perhaps *The City of God*, an elaborate defence of Christianity against pagan mythology and philosophy. It is, in the words of Dean Milman (*History of Latin Christianity*, iii. 280) "at once the funeral oration of the ancient society and the gratulatory panegyric of the new. The Babylon of the West had passed away . . . in its place had arisen the city of God, the Church of Christ; a new social system had emerged from the ashes of the old; that system was founded by God, was ruled by divine laws, and had the divine promise of perpetuity."

6. "ought to be idle." S. Augustine's views on labour (he wrote a treatise *De Opere Monachorum*) did not meet the approval of the easy-going Monk in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*:

> "Let Austin have his swynke to him reserved."

16. "I ne nyste": I did not know. Double and multiple negatives (of which Caxton's works are full) are found in the earlier and less refined stages of nearly all languages, and sometimes in the later. "Nyste" is, of course, "ne wyste"; similarly "nill" = "ne will" = will not.

18. S. Bernard, "the mellifluous Doctor" (1091-1153), a great light of the mediæval Church. He founded a centre of reformed monasticism at Clairvaux—a saintly solitude which he refused to leave for the

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highest dignities. Yet he was constantly summoned from it to act as counsellor or helper in grave public affairs. He earnestly promoted a crusade for the deliverance of the Holy Land, but it fell to pieces owing to the unworthiness of its leaders, and its failure hastened his death.

15. 23. Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus, descendant of an eminent old Roman family, was for a long period at the beginning of the sixth century A.D. the chief minister of Theodoric the Great, King of the Ostrogoths. Retiring to a monastery in southern Italy, he there, between the ages of seventy and a hundred, wrote many treatises, among them "De Artibus et Disciplinis, Liberalium Litterarum," from which Caxton here quotes.

16. 4. Prosper, S., of Aquitaine, a theologian of the fifth century.

14. Discoursing on Psalm liii. ("Deus in nomine tuo") S. Augustine comments on the words "voluntarie sacrificabo tibi," explaining why and how our sacrifice must be voluntary. "If you praise God in order that he may give you some gift, this is no genuine praise of God. If you praise God for the sake of obtaining money, then, if you had already that money, you would not praise God; this, then, is not to praise God for himself, not to offer sacrifice voluntarily."

16. "franchise": deliverance. A good work freely undertaken is the reverse of slave work. S. Augustine, in reference to the manual labour of monks, quotes S. Paul, who speaks of his own manual labour as having been undertaken without any compulsion, physical or moral.

23. "I have submised myself": bent my shoulders to the task. Latin *submittere*.

17. 29. William, Earl of Arundel, a generous patron of Caxton.

THE HISTORY OF JOB

19. 1. "The land of Uz": the wild region of Trachonitis, lying inland from the Jordan.

18. "Satan": the "adversary," chief of the fallen angels, allowed to tempt man to evil and so to have a hand in human affairs.

25. "idly": without gain. "Job serves for lucre," is the implied meaning.

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20. 15. " Sabea " : a northern part of Arabia, of old famed for its spices—" Sabæan odours."

21. 22. " for his soul " : to save his life.

22. 1. " bless him no more." This expresses the sense of the original Latin, but is the very opposite of a literal translation. " Benedic Deo ' means " bless God." But it is here used for " say good-bye to God," and so " renounce him utterly." In the efforts of various translators we can see evidence of the confusion caused by so puzzling an expression.

Caxton's scriptural quotations are all closely translated from the " Vulgate "—" Scripturarum editio communis et vulgata "—the Latin version which since the fifth century became the official and authorised text of Western Christendom.

20. S Gregory, first Pope of that name, called " the Great," who sent Augustine into England to preach Christianity in 597. See his life in this volume.

22. " I pass over." It is a pity that Caxton did not supply a brief account of the great debate carried on by Job and his friends as to the justice and providence of God. Their views are not always easy to understand, but the profundity and sublimity of the religious poem thus composed are unrivalled.

" A religious poem," or " moral apologue," is a just description of the Book of Job ; its narrative portions give a dramatic and poetic form to events taken from actual life.

29-32. Observe correct use of "ye" and "you," as nom. and obj. respectively.

Job was a Gentile, not a Jew. This gives a peculiar interest to his story and to the fact of its inclusion among the Hebrew sacred books. It shows that the exclusiveness of the Jews—by which they were sheltered from the corrupting influence of the surrounding idolatry—did not prevent their acknowledging that the protecting hand and saving providence of God were extended over all men alike.

The patience of Job under severe tribulation is referred to by Tobias and by S. James. It has become proverbial. Yet Job gave sufficient evidence of very strong feeling under his trials. It is consoling for the sorely-tried to learn on the authority of Scripture that the patience of a saint is not the same thing as the patience of a stone.

In Christian times this patriarch has not lacked honours. The Roman and other martyrologies (calendars of saints) give him a niche under date of the 10th May :—

" Sancti Job prophetæ, admirandæ patientiæ viri."

A liturgical office for the day is found in some missals. Altars, chapels, and churches were dedicated to him in Venice, Antwerp and Louvain. Many hospitals have been placed under his patronage.

S. THOMAS, APOSTLE

S. Thomas is well known to us from the Gospels. In his 20th chapter the Evangelist John tells us of his doubt concerning the reality of our Lord's resurrection and the setting of those doubts at rest by the condescension of Christ, who permitted him to touch and examine the wounds inflicted during the Passion. The incidents which occupy the text of the *Golden Legend* have their earliest source (so far as is known) in the *Acta Thomæ*, a romantic composition written (probably) in Syriac about the beginning of the third century.

VI. 6. The tradition that S. Thomas carried the preaching of the Gospel as far as Hindostan has much to support it. King " Gundoferus " was an historical personage. About the year A.D. 46 a king was reigning over that part of Asia comprised in the modern Afghanistan, Baluchistan, the Punjaub and Sind, who bore the name Gondophernes or Guduphara : we know this from his coins, and from an inscription at Takhti-Bahi. A body of Christians has existed in India from very early ages, which has always claimed S. Thomas as their founder, and there is some traditional evidence of his having suffered martyrdom at Mylapore in the district of Madras.

23. " The King would be angry." Like the king in the Gospel (Luke xiv.), when the invited guests offered excuses for not attending his great marriage feast.

26. The praising of guests, especially distinguished ones, by minstrels at a feast is an old custom in many lands. It might seem an anticipation of our modern complimentary after-dinner speeches. Cp. the greeting of Marmion by the ministrels at Norham :

> And there, with herald pomp and state,
> They hailed Lord Marmion :
> They hailed him Lord of Fontenaye, . . .
> Of Tamworth tower and town.

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Then followed the demand for "largesse."

> And he their courtesy to requite
> Gave them a chain of twelve marks weight
> All as he lighted down.

26. 25. "Sacred": consecrated French *sacré*.

29. 6. "perdurable." Caxton is curiously fond of employing this rather pretty adjective. It died out of English use (in prose at all events) for two or three centuries, but was revived by Southey and other nineteenth-century writers.

29. 8-10. "Cunning," etc.: Caxton here gives us nonsense. It should run somewhat thus (following both French and Latin): "Cunning [L. *ingenium*, F. *engin*] is that thou shouldst find what thou hast not learned. Memory is that thou shouldst not forget what thou hast learned."

33. 11. "sourded": sprang up. Fr. *sourdre*; Lat. *surgere*.

33. 12. "quick": alive; qualifies "bishop," not "people."

19. Isidore: a Father of the Church, bishop of Seville in the seventh century.

22. "miscreants": unbelievers. Fr. *mécreants*, from Lat. *minus* and *credentes*.

26. "demened his predication unto the title of his passion": carried on his preaching until the conclusion of his martyrdom. From meaning an inscription, the Latin *titulus* (which "title" here represents) came to mean "boundary-mark" then "limit" "conclusion."

28. Chrysostom: S. John, greatest of the Greek fathers, Patriarch of Constantinople, A.D. 397, a man of singular and varied gifts, notably eloquence.

S. MARTHA

34. 26. "a great dragon." This monster, traditionally called in the S. of France the "Tarasque," resembles others which have been created by the popular imagination in days when and in places where the wilder recesses of nature are hardly, if at all, explored. Such are the three different monsters who figure in the Old English poem *Beowulf*. These mythical beings seem sometimes simply personifications of the darkness and mystery of nature's un-

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explored recesses, sometimes creations out of more tangible elements—unhealthy fogs, wild beasts, aboriginal forest-men, banished enemies and outlaws. Of some such nature, or possibly of more definitely individual character, may have been the evil thing which S. Martha was traditionally represented as combating.

35. 10. "wood": wild, mad, furious.

36. 9. "unnethe": with difficulty, scarcely. A.S. *unéadig.*

20. "Emorissa": afflicted with a flux of blood.

29. Ambrose: Saint and Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Milan in the year 374, famous for his share in the conversion of S. Augustine, his eloquent and learned writings, and his courageous stand against the Emperor Theodosius, whom he compelled to do public penance for a great crime.

37. 2. "to-broken": broken to pieces; *to* is an intensive prefix. *Cf.* Judges ix. 53, A.V., "all to brake his skull."

21. "tourbe": crowd, multitude. Lat. *turba.*

23. "Eli": "my God."

32. "harbour," like German *herberge*, meant a place of refuge or shelter for land-travellers as well as for sea-farers.

38. 17. Petrogoricke: later Périgueux. S. Frontonius, in Modern French "Saint Front," is honoured as its patron.

39. 22. Clovis, in the original Frankish Chlodwig, Latinised into "Clodovæus" (Ludwig and Louis and Ludovicus are really the same name): a chief of the Franks who by his victories over Roman and other rivals, laid the foundations of a Frankish empire, and was baptised a Christian by S. Remy at Rheims in 496.

SS. ADRIAN AND NATALIE

These Acts are characteristic of the very numerous records and legends which remain to us from the fierce ordeal which Christianity underwent during the days of Maximian, Galerius and Diocletian—the days immediately preceding its formal recognition by the Emperor Constantine. This persecution

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(reckoned the tenth and last) began about A.D. 303 and lasted nearly ten years, during which the victims were numbered by many thousands, and death was usually preceded by cruel tortures.

42. 6. "meiny": household. See note on page 285.

43. 23. "eculee": a kind of wooden rack for torture. Latin *equuleus*, from *equus* = horse. This French word never took root in English.

44. 10. "beaten with . . . men." So Shakespeare has: "he was torn with a bear," and "himself . . . marred with traitors." But since the sixteenth century *with* is used only of inanimate agents.

45. 6. "to-frusshed": crushed to pieces. *To* is an intensive prefix; *frusshed* is from Fr. *froisser*, from Latin *frustum* = a morsel.

S. CHRISTOPHER

The name and fame and cult of S. Christopher have been spread throughout Christendom since extremely early times. He is mentioned in the oldest martyrologies, but simply as a martyr in Lycia. S. Gregory the Great about A.D. 600 mentions a monastery dedicated to him. In forms of his story earlier than that given (for the first time) by Jacobus de Voragine, a savage, even bestial, character is ascribed to Christopher: he belongs to a race of "dog-heads" who feed on human flesh. But at its crudest the legend brought out noble ideas—that of the conversion of great natural powers from base or evil uses to good, that of merely natural man elevated above himself by supernatural grace. This was recognized by Luther (among others), who, though he rejected the tale as fictitious, yet thought it a beautiful allegory.

The celebrated Latin poet of the Renaissance, Vida, has from this point of view summed up well the significance of the Saint's various attributes:—

> Christophore, infixum quod eum usque in corde gerebas,
> Pictores Christum dant tibi ferre humeris; etc.

> Because thou barest Christ within thy breast,
> The limners show him on thy neck at rest;
> Because thou faithful wast, by torment tried,
> They paint thee stemming the wild torrent's pride;

Since none could this, save man of giant limb,
They gave thee thews and mould of Anakim;
But since no hostel could their giant bar,
They made thee houseless guest of moon and star;
Then since thou conqueror wast of every foe,
The greening palm-bough in thy hand they show;
Art gives her best; the truth she cannot paint;
Accept our childish best, O kindly Saint!
(Editor's translation.)

In fact the story of the converted giant produced a noble harvest of Christian beneficence. Refuges for poor travellers were set up in his name. In 1386 a hospice and brotherhood was founded on the Pennine Alps at a spot called Arleberg, for the succour of wayfarers; the founder was a poor herdsman, who put into the work his own savings and whatever he could beg from others. This centre of charity was wantonly destroyed during the religious wars of the sixteenth century, but revived in 1627. We also hear in various times and places of brotherhoods established under S. Christopher's patronage for the putting down of intemperance, cursing, and other vices.

48. 4. "cubits": a cubit measured from 18 to 22 inches.

50. 30. "Habitacle": dwelling; from Latin *habitaculum*. The accent was moved to the second syllable and then the word, in seaman's language, took a strange turn into *binnacle*.

51. 31. "Flour" and "flower" are the same word. Latin *florem*.

52. 10. "Covered his visage." The face of the huge man was terrible and fearful—according to some versions monstrous and hideous—and its power appears presently.

53. 7. "Tofore or": redundant = "before ere."

16. "Dagarus." Why should this name mean "death of the world, etc?" The ways of mediæval etymology (indeed of etymology up to the nineteenth century) were often wonderful. It was a region of limitless possibilities where no methodical paths were recognized. *The Golden Legend* is full of daring excursions into the mystic world of unscientific derivations. The following extract may serve as a specimen:—

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Eufemia is said of eu, that is good, and of femme, that is a woman; that is to wit a profitable, honest and delectable, for in this treble manner she is said good. She was profitable to others by conversation, honest by ordinance of manner, and delectable to God. Or Eufemia is said of euphonia as sweetness of sound. Sweet sound is made in three manners, that is to wit by voice, as in singing, by touching, as in a harp, and by blowing, as in pipes and organs. Thus was the blessed Eufemia sweet sound to God in voice of predication, in touching of good works and in blowing of devotion.

One sees the method. It is a poem, a game, a sermon, anything but a scientific enquiry. As to the particular quibble here indulged in, it had assumed various forms before Caxton took it up, and a full inquiry into its intricacies would lead us outside the scope of these notes.

S. DOROTHY

This legend does not belong to the *Legenda Aurea*. In even the most ancient forms of it which we possess it is of doubtful historical value, as the Bollandists have pointed out. On the other hand, it contains much which is not only of beauty and interest but is also highly characteristic of the early Christian martyrdoms.

57. 15. "appaired": impaired, injured. Lat. *ad* and *pejor*.

S. NICHOLAS OF MYRA

62. 1. "Patras": in Achaia, in the north-east of the Peloponnesus or Morea.

4. "japes": jests, sports: see p. 276. The word has been revived by Scott, Lamb, Barham, and Lang.

63. 10. "Mirea": or Myra, chief city of the ancient Lycia in Asia Minor.

64. 5. "cruel": means no more than "stern, severe."

7. "Nice": Nicæa in Asia Minor, famous for two ecclesiastical Councils: *not* Nice in Savoy.

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64. 24. "vitaille." Observe how in pronunciation we still adhere to this form rather than to the Latin *victualia* to which our modern spelling pedantically conforms. *Victualia* is from *vivere*—things to *live* on.

28. "muys": measures. French *muid*; Latin *modius*.

66. 10. "awaits": hindrances.

62. "righter": a rare word exactly parallel to the German *richter*—one who does right, a judge or executioner.

69. 1. "royame" kingdom. French *royaume*; pop. Latin *regalimen*.

20. "oil." The finding of an oily liquid of inoffensive or agreeable odour in the tombs of persons famed for sanctity is very frequently mentioned by their biographers. The subject is discussed and illustrated in the *Catholic Encyclopædia* (s.v. "Oil").

71. 14. "had do make ready": had caused to be made ready. Caxton is peculiarly fond of this idiom. It can hardly be admired; yet modern English has found no satisfactory substitute for it. "He got the dinner prepared" or "he had the dinner prepared" are colloquial and ambiguous: no other expression of the meaning is brief and idiomatic. The French would be: "il fit cuire le dîner"; the German "er liess bereiten das Essen" (from *lassen* = let).

20. "quarfox," also written *carfox*, *carefox*, *carfoukes*, *Carfax* (at Oxford), etc., etc.: a cross-roads. Like French *carrefour*, it comes from the Latin, *quadrifurcus*, *-a*, *-um*. The etymologists, however, have not explained the persistent appearance of *s* (*x*) and absence of *r* in the final syllable of the English forms.

The events recorded of S. Nicholas are so few or so uncertain, and his local connections were so broken up among Greece, Asia Minor and Italy, that it is surprising how strong his cultus became, and how vigorously it survived. He is (either alone or with other saints) patron of Russia, Greece, Naples, Sicily, Lorraine and many cities and towns, *e.g.* Galway in Ireland. His name, everywhere familiar, has become peculiarly so in the form "Santa Claus" under which he is, for the children of Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and nowadays of England, the distributor of Christmas gifts. His selection for this office is doubtless owing to the records of his infantine sanctity and to his having worked famous miracles in favour of little children.

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THE SEVEN SLEEPERS

Παῖδες λιπόντες πρὸς μικρὸν μακροὺς ὕπνους
Ἔπνωσαν αὖθις τὸν μετ' ἐρήνης ὕπνον.

These youths, a little while their wondrous sleep forsaking,
Sink soon again to know the sleep that knows no waking.

Such were the lines written of the "Seven Sleepers" by a Greek of (perhaps) the seventh century. At that date the knowledge and cult of these confessors were very widely spread from East to West. Their earliest Acta date from about A.D. 500—their supposed awakening having occurred in 434—and before his death in 450 Theodosius the Younger had built at Ephesus a temple over their supposed relics. In the sixth century S. Gregory of Tours translated their Acts into Latin. Of their celebrity in the eleventh century we see evidence in our Life of S. Edward. Yet, in spite of the early testimony to their story and the early acceptance of their cult, critical historical opinion, even of the most orthodox school, has remained hostile. Cardinal Baronius, for example, in the sixteenth century and Dom Adrian Fortescue in the twentieth (see the *Catholic Encyclopædia*) have rejected the whole story as a fable. Its interest as a parable of the resurrection of the body and its value as an illustration of homilies on that doctrine—points wherein lay its chief appeal to the pious souls who accepted it as historically true—do not disappear with the acceptance of the more sceptical view, and they appear clearly in our present version.

72. 2. The Emperor Decius reigned from A.D. 249 to 251; Theodosius the Great from 379 to 395; Theodosius the Younger from 408 to 450. The dates in Caxton's version are loose and incorrect, as the translator expressly recognizes.

75. 2. "shillings," used as equivalents for *solidi*—gold coins which at the period of this tale were worth about eight shillings.

S. MACARIUS

81. 1. Macarius lived in Upper Egypt in the fourth century. His history has been confused with that of other personages of the same name.

83. 1. In his repentance for killing the fly that bit him, the ancient ascetic of the Desert was (it is safe to assert) chiefly moved by the thought of his having refused to bear a suffering sent him by divine providence.

S. Francis of Assisi nine centuries later was reluctant to destroy insects, however annoying; but his feeling was a different one; it was predominantly that of unwillingness to inflict pain and death on creatures of God that are so marvellously made and that proclaim in so many ways His goodness. The eyes of Macarius would see in the world a desert of exile and a field of battle against sensuality and worldliness—a place where small sufferings should be despised and great ones magnanimously accepted. The eyes of Francis would see in all creatures, great and small, a vast family bound in chains of love to one another and to the throne of one Heavenly Father.

S. ANTHONY

81. 1. Anthony was born in Egypt about the year A.D. 250. The facts of his life were handed down to posterity by the illustrious writer and defender of orthodoxy, S. Athanasius.

83. 4. "all to-rent his body," etc.: tore in pieces his body so that he supposed he was certain to die.

87. 13. "empesh": prevent. French *empêcher*, Lat. *impedicare*. "Did I see him before me," says Newman (in his *Church of the Fathers, Anthony in Conflict*), "I might be tempted, with my cut and dried opinions, and my matter of fact ways, and my selfishness and pusillanimity, to consider him somewhat of an enthusiast; but what I desire to point out is . . . the subdued and Christian form which was taken by his enthusiasm, if it must be so called. It was not vulgar, bustling, imbecile, unstable, undutiful; it was calm and composed, manly, intrepid, magnanimous, full of affectionate loyalty to the Church and to the Truth." "Superstition," he again says, "is abject and crouching; it is full of thoughts of guilt; it distrusts God, and dreads the powers of evil. Anthony at least had nothing of this, being full of holy confidence, divine peace, cheerfulness and valorousness." In what has been preserved of his discourses and counsels as well as in many anecdotes related of him, we are impressed by his good sense, urbanity, and gentleness.

In his conflicts with evil spirits, there is little that a student of Holy Scripture will look upon as new or strange. As to the objective reality of such experiences it is rash to dogmatize, either in general or in particular cases. All who believe in the existence of a spiritual world and are not mere materialists

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must admit the possibility or probability of our coming from time to time into momentous and conscious contact with that world. But as to the frequency and character of actual cases of contact, as well as about particular instances alleged, there may be wide differences of opinion.

Of the eremetical life in general a word should perhaps here be said. That manner of life was a human attempt to reproduce one portion of the example given by the Divine Model—that of His forty days' fast and temptation in the wilderness and of His long night-vigils and prayers on the mountain-sides. In ages very different from ours it had a singularly strong appeal for earnest men and women. How strong we may gather from Athanasius's account of the effect produced by Anthony's example during and immediately after his lifetime :—

" Among the mountains there were monasteries as if tabernacles filled with divine choirs, singing, studying, fasting, praying, exulting in the hope of things to come, working for alms deeds, having love and harmony one towards another. And truly it was given to one there to see a peculiar comity of piety and righteousness. Neither injurer nor injured was there, nor chiding of the tax-collector ; but a multitude of ascetics, whose one feeling was towards holiness. So that a stranger, seeing the monasteries and their order, would be led to cry out : ' How beauteous are thy homes, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel ; as shady groves, as a garden on a river, as tents which the Lord has pitched, and as cedars by the waters ! ' "

Such a tribute to the monastic and contemplative life is especially interesting as coming from one who was himself thoroughly a man of zeal, action, and conflict. See also *infra* the life of S. Austin for the sentiments of that Father towards monasticism.

S. BENEDICT AND S. SCHOLASTICA

83. 1. The source of this story is the *Book of Dialogues of S. Gregory the Great.*

Benedict of Nursia, looked on as the patriarch of Western Monasticism, flourished in the beginning of the sixth century A.D. " The history of the Order which bears his name is an important part of the history of European civilization. From the period when he impressed on monastic life that character of activity in arts and letters and simplicity in matters of devotion, . . . monasteries became equally the refuge of learning and piety. Admiring

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that result of his labours, men of all creeds unite in reverencing the name of S. Benedict" (*Imperial Dict. of Universal Biography*). In addition to the cares of religion and letters, manual labour of all kinds came within the Benedictine scope. "We owe the agricultural restoration of great part of Europe to the monks," says Hallam. They were, according to Guizot, "the agriculturists of Europe; they cleared it on a large scale"; they drained morasses, made roads, and built bridges. With monasteries of men grew also those for women, like that presided over by his sister S. Scholastica. "In them the gentle arts were cultivated and women found a refuge from the rude violence of turbulent ages." See Cardinal Newman's essays, "The Mission of St Benedict" and "The Benedictine Centuries."

S. AUSTIN OR AUGUSTINE

Abundant materials exist for the biography of this great convert and father of the Church: in the front rank stand his own "Confessions" and the Life written by his friend Possidius.

S. Augustine wrote a Latinity which, partly owing to the acuteness and activity of his mind, partly owing to long training in the arts of rhetoric, is singularly subtle and ingenious. It is not surprising that it should sometimes have baffled Caxton and his assistants in passages where they have to render texts of the Saint himself. Typographical errors, old and new, have induced further confusion. We have, therefore, modified the Caxton wording in a few places in order to bring out the altered or obscured meaning of the original.

89. 24. "that Jesus Christ was fantastic": that His human body was a mere illusion.

90. 1. "a book of philosophy": the *Hortensius* of Cicero.

22. "by the voice of a prophet": with prophetic utterance.

91. 30. "in such distresses": in the severities of the Christian life. Augustine *saw* what was right in faith and morals, but was not therefore converted. In his writings he constantly dwells on the doctrine that light of the intellect, however bright, is not necessarily accompanied or followed by the gift of faith, much less by virtuous action; that the gift and virtue of faith, though resting on an intellectual foundation, is gained and held only by the human will in co-operation with divine grace.

32. Simplicianus was a venerable old man, the fame of whose sanctity and prudence had reached Augustine;

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he became the successor of S. Ambrose, as Bishop of Milan in 397.

92. 28. Pontitianus was a distinguished soldier of African birth.

29. Anthony. See extracts from his life in this volume.

The high ideals, devotion and asceticism of the eremitical or monastic life appealed to Augustine. Anthony and his fellow-hermits, the "children and maidens" who served God perpetually in the churches, their bodily self-denial, their voluntary poverty, their obedience, stimulated to a complete triumph over sensuality one not born for half measures. At his death he left to his diocese, according to his biographer Possidius, "monasteries of men and women well supplied with superiors and subjects," to keep alive this sacred fire which had warmed himself.

93. 32. The complete text which was the turning-point of his conversion is given by Augustine as follows: *Non in comessationibus et ebrietatibus, non in cubilibus et impudicitiis, non in contentione et æmulatione: sed induimini Dominum Jesum Christum, et carnis curam ne feceritis in desideriis:* "Not in revellings and drunkenness, not in forbidden and impure indulgences, not in contention and jealousy: but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and provide not for the flesh to excite its desires" (S. Paul, Rom. xiii. 13 and 14).

94. 25. "Isaiah . . . he deferred to read." *Ego primam hujus lectionem non intelligens, totumque talem arbitrans, distuli repetendum exercitatior in dominico eloquio* (Confess. ix. 5).

(The construction of *exercitatior* is curious.) In the fifth and sixth books of his Confessions Augustine had already told of his endeavours to arrive with the help of S. Ambrose and others at a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures. Of the difficulties of such an endeavour he retained a humble conviction to the end of his life. "Great is the depth of thy words," he exclaims (Conf. xiii. ch. 14), "their surface lies before us, tempting little ones; but great is their depth, O my God, and to gaze deep into them fills the soul with awe, with a trembling veneration, with a loving fear." In harmony with this feeling were the anxious desires he constantly manifested for a correct canon of the sacred books and for interpretations in accordance with the mind of the Church.

95. 8. "*Te Deum Laudamus.*" The traditional story here given is of very questionable historical value. The hymn, which is largely a mosaic, is now very plausibly

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attributed to Nicetas, Bishop of Remesiana, *circa* 400 A.D.

93 25. "grees" (Lat. *gradus*): steps. "A song of degrees," or "steps," is a name given to some of the Psalms. "Sharp arrows and coals wasting" is quoted from one of these (Ps. 119 Vulg., 120 Hebr.). "Pierced and inflamed with thy love," so Augustine says here in substance; "I could not weary of meditating on thy wonderful and loving counsels towards the salvation of the human race."

95. 8. "truffes and japes": deceits and tricks. *Truffe* (the same word is in the French text) is apparently connected with *trifle* and perhaps with *truffle*. *Jape*, like Fr. *japper*, to bark, is probably of imitative origin; the succession of meanings would be (1) foolish noise, (2) buffoonery, (3) tricks.

19. "Tiberina," sc. "Ostia": the port of Rome.

28. "lest he should be let": hindered. Lat. *ne impediretur*.

99. 12. "ravished out of his meats": "carried away by the pleasure of eating" is probably what the translator understood by this phrase. But he has really blundered very curiously. "Raptatus extra metas necessitatis" is the text of S. Aug.: "carried beyond the limits of necessity."

100. 2. "and thou blamest him": *and* (often written *an*) for "if."

101. 12. "If I die never, etc." Orig.: "Si nunquam, bene; si aliquando, quare non modo?" This cryptically condensed utterance has been rendered unintelligible in the French and the Caxton versions. "If I did never well but seldom, wherefore should he deliver me now?" is one form it takes.

102. 20. Augustine's idea of the Two Cities and their Kings has been adopted and worked out by S. Ignatius de Loyola in his famous Meditation "on Two Standards." See his *Exercitia Spiritualia*, of which there are many versions and developments, or the interesting story, "The Two Standards," by Dr William Barry.

104. 20. "engine" (Lat. *ingenium*): ability, talents.

105. 23. "volumes . . . among whom." Observe use of *whom* as a neuter relative.

S. BRANDON

The oldest versions we possess of the "Acta Brandani" go back to the tenth or eleventh centuries A.D. The picturesque and poetic narrative they contain is but one among several of similar character

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that have survived to our day from the wreck of ancient Celtic literature. They make live again for us peculiar racial traits of belief and imagination. They tell the true tale of a remarkable racial impulse. In what may be called the heroic age of Irish Christianity a strange love of wandering, combined with severe asceticism, desire for solitude, eager imagination and fearless daring, sent forth Irish monks and their disciples in frail skin-covered boats to traverse stormy oceans and to find a wild home in lonely islets. We read of such an expedition preceding even the preaching of S. Patrick,—when S. Ailbe devised an expedition to visit the "Ultima Thule" which we now call Iceland. S. Cormac, called "the Navigator," sailed far into the northern seas, nor desisted till at last the sight of huge whales frightened his crew homewards again. But more wonderful are the detailed voyages of Maeldune, of the O'Corras, of Brendan; for in these the boundary separating the real from the ideal, the visible material world from the uncarthly and spiritual, seems to have vanished. We sometimes do not know whether the fearless voyagers are landing upon some new island of the Atlantic or entering some new region of purgatory; whether they move in the realms of geographical exploration, or of mystical vision, or of simple fairy tale.

It is not surprising to find that the Bollandists decline altogether to admit into the serious tomes of their *Acta Sanctorum* the "Acta Brandani," declaring them to be romance, not history.

111. 1. "owhere": anywhere. A.S. *aeghwaer*.

112. 27. "land of Behest": of promise.

115. 6. "ferial day"; ordinary week-day.

116 8. "conversation": obviously not in the modern sense. Their holy conversation, *i.e.* manner of life, was chiefly marked by their never conversing—in the modern sense.

16. "ankers": anchorites.

118. 26. "gryppe": griffon: fabulous creature with lion's body and eagle's head and wings.

119. 31. "malles" hammers. Lat. *malleus*; found in Spenser.

121. 11. This story of Judas has been told in verse by Matthew Arnold.

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123. 24. "S. Patrick's Purgatory": in an island of Lough Derg, amid wild and lonely surrounding—part of the Irish county of Fermanagh. It has been celebrated as a place of pilgrimage since the twelfth century. At the present day thousands of devout persons of all classes frequent it at certain times of the year and perform severe penitential exercises.

126. 20. "ere he pass." This brings forcibly before us the strange indeterminateness of these ocean-lands. The narrator seldom knows, and he does not greatly care, whether they are material or spiritual realities, crude facts or significant phantasmagoria. How far remote are the atmosphere and tone of this old Keltic tale from those of Defoe's and Swift's fictions, from the clear-cut, even brutal realisms of *Robinson Crusoe*, the *Journal of the Plague*, *Gulliver's Travels*!

S. GREGORY THE GREAT

The materials for the biography of so remarkable an historical personage as this pope are naturally abundant. His own writings, however, though voluminous, do not tell us much about himself; and in the early Middle Ages a certain amount of unauthorized legend grew up around his name. He was born about A.D. 540, was elected pope in 590, and died in 604.

130. 22. It is strange that Caxton does not give in full the story, so interesting to Englishmen, of what Gregory said in the slave-market. It is thus given by the Venerable Bede:

> On a certain day when many things were exposed for sale by merchants in the [Roman] forum and many buyers had assembled, Gregory came among others and saw boys set forth for sale as slaves, who were remarkable for their fair and beautiful complexions, faces and hair. Looking on them, he asked from what part of the earth they had been brought. He was told "from the island of Britain, the inhabitants of which bore such an aspect." Again he asked whether the inhabitants of that island were Christians, or still bound in the errors of paganism. He was told that they were pagans. Deeply sighing, he said: "Alas, that the prince of darkness should possess men of such shining countenances, and that so fair a title-page tells of a mind within devoid of divine grace!" Again he asked what was the name of their nation. He was told "they are called *Angli*." "It is well," he replied, "for they have faces of angels, and such men ought to be co-heirs of angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they come?" It was answered: "Deira." "It is well," he

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replied; "*de ira Dei* (from the wrath of God) they shall be delivered and called to the mercy of Christ. What is the name of the ruler of that province?" He was told that his name was Ælla. And Gregory replied: "Alleluia! Praise to God shall be sung in those regions."

133. 7. The whole anthem, which has been specially associated with Eastertide, runs as follows:

Regina cœli, lætare, alleluia;
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,
Resurrexit
Sicut dixit,
Alleluia;
Ora pro nobis deum, alleluia.

It has not been traced back farther than the twelfth century.

14. The Castello di Sant'Angelo, standing on the right bank of the Tiber, near the Vatican, was for many centuries the chief citadel of the popes, as temporal rulers, and is still a remarkable feature of the city of Rome.

136. 11. Caxton shortens up very summarily Jacobus de Voragine's setting forth of the theological *crux* here presented. Was it really "hell" to which Trajan had been condemned, had he really died, was he restored to life, was it only the pain of sense from which he was delivered, or the pain of the loss of God also?—such are the speculations which the Archbishop records as having arisen. Personally, he does not decidedly commit himself to the truth of the story.

17. "prayed for a paynim." This is incorrect; *pro damnato* is the Latin; *pour ung dampné* the French.

24. "axes": ague.

137. 26. "the song of the office of holy church." The traditional chant of the Liturgy has always been commonly known as "Gregorian," on account of the part taken by S. Gregory in its right ordering.

30. "where he lay." As might be expected from his extremely laborious and ascetic life, Gregory's health during his pontificate was very feeble; and his business, such as the teaching of his scholars, was sometimes transacted from a couch on which he reclined.

S. WINIFRED

The *Acta* (or Life) of this saint are ascribed to her contemporary Elerius, concerning whom see the text. As we have them, they are probably not older than the thirteenth century, from which we possess

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another life by one Robert of Salisbury. The story of Winifred is told in just the same way in the *Acta* of S. Beuno (see next note), which are independent and of great antiquity. She is not mentioned by De Voragine. A nineteenth-century historian of the diocese of S. Asaph tries (hardly with success) to make out that the story is a fountain and river myth.

Guenevra is a more Celtic form of her name. The well which perpetuates her memory is called in Welsh Ffynnon Gwenffrewi.

139. 1. S. Beuno, notable as a preacher of the Gospel, was born in the seventh century of a Welsh father and a Scotch mother at Banhenic, in Powis, on the Severn. His name is commonly pronounced (not quite correctly) to rhyme with "rhino." He ended his life at the Abbey of Clynnog-vawr, in Carnarvonshire, which was the chief of his monastic foundations.

23. "Cradok," or Carádoc, Latinized as Caractacus.

143. 4. The story of the sending of the chasuble is told better and at greater length in the original Latin. It is there said that a gift of the same kind (a chasuble is an upper vestment worn in saying Mass) was sent in this way by Winifred to Beuno every year on the first of May.

S. Brigid of Kildare is related to have used with success this same simple method of transmission by stream and sea.

10. Wytheriacus: Gwitherin in Powis.

13. "Elerius": in Welsh *Elwy*, after whom (it is said) the river Elwy in N. Wales is called.

As in the time of Elerius, so in Caxton's and in ours there remains to be seen the "fair well giving out abundantly fair clear water, where our Lord God yet daily sheweth many miracles." It is one of the finest springs in the world as regards the extraordinary volume of water which it gives out. It possesses no special medicinal properties. Nevertheless the cures of various kinds that have been reported as wrought for themselves by the numerous pilgrims who, in a spirit of confidence in God and in the intercession of the Saint, drink the water or bathe in it, have long been a matter of general notoriety.

We first hear of the celebrity of the holy well about the year 1100, when the Countess Adeliza and her son, Earl of Chester, came to pay their devotions and offer gifts. In 1420 Pope Martin V. gave indulgences to the pilgrims. There is a well-authenticated cure of the year 1667, quoted by the Bollandists

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(November, Tom. i. 743). Roger Whetstone, sixty years old, so paralysed that he walked on two crutches and could not feed himself, came to the well, found himself unable to bathe, but drank of the water; he was immediately cured and flung away his crutches. Having been a Quaker, he became a Roman Catholic. The facts are testified to by his fellow-Quaker, Robert Hill of Worcester, who apparently did not follow his change of religion.

From modern cures reported it may be of interest to select a few cases that seem most fully authenticated:—

In 1805, Winifred White, cured suddenly, completely and permanently of spinal disease which had rendered her a complete cripple. The case was investigated by the famous Bishop Milner, who published the result of his inquiries in 1806.

In 1859, Christopher Clarke, a discharged soldier, of blindness which had lasted thirty years. Inquired into and publicly attested by the then Lord Denbigh.

In 1877, Louisa Walker, of Liverpool, a Wesleyan Methodist; cured of epilepsy and other ailments.

In 1879, George Sydney Doran, a paralytic lad of 13 years. His mother in her account gives the names of four Liverpool doctors, who had attended him before and seen him after his cure, which was complete and lasting.

S. EDWARD, KING AND CONFESSOR

144. 10. Edgar the Peaceful reigned from A.D. 959 to 975, and with the help of S. Dunstan and other Benedictines promoted national prosperity in every way.

146. 29. "woodness": madness, fury.

148. 25. Edwin and Oswald: Northumbrian kings. Edwin was carried off to Wales from the violence of a usurper at the age of three, but after many vicissitudes rose to supreme power and reigned prosperously from 617 to 633. Oswald, nephew of Edwin, as a youthful exile among the monks of Iona, was there trained in wisdom and virtue, and afterwards, as undisputed king of Northumbria, showed the qualities of a model ruler.

150. 8. "grudging": complaining. The picture of universal peace and well-doing is somewhat too highly coloured, but in the main not false to history.

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151. 2. "sad": serious, grave—such was his conversation, though "meddled," *i.e.* intermingled, with mirth.

156. 1. "The Pope." At this time S. Leo IX., who, during an epoch very troublous for the Holy See, adorned it with his virtues. For the general evils of this time see S. Edward's dying words below.

157. 9. "Bull under lead." The word "bull" (Latin *bulla*, used to describe an important papal document) really means a seal or badge. Such seals were and are usually leaden; on some rare occasions they have been golden.

159. 24. "took him on his shoulders." It was well understood in the Middle Ages that without some *personal* service of the poor, sick, etc., Christ's law of charity is but imperfectly fulfilled.

161. 21. "letters of grewe: . . . twelve crosses, etc." All this belongs to the antique ceremony of consecrating churches, one part of which was the writing by the bishop with his crozier of the Greek and Latin alphabets on the sand-strewn floor. Grewe means Greek.

162. 19. "Leofric": the wise Earl of Mercia.

163. 13. "conning": knowledge.

167. 24 "The seven sleepers." See their story in this volume.

168. 28. "great age." Edward was but sixty-three when he died.

176. 9. "Cene-Thursday": Thursday of the *Coena*—Last Supper.

10. "prolonged": deferred, not shown in the king's lifetime.

S. YVES OR IVES

The acts of this saint have the special interest for us that they are extremely well authenticated. We have the sworn testimony of 249 juridical witnesses as to the facts of his life. These witnesses were summoned for the process for his canonization, which was begun in 1330, under Pope John XXII., twenty-seven years after his death. In 1665 this mass of evidence was transcribed and edited by the Bollandists. This Breton Saint Yves is not to be confounded with S. Yves or Ivo of Chartres, who lived two centuries earlier and was a voluminous and distinguished writer. As for the town of St Ives in

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Cornwall, it is called after an Irish Virgin-Saint, who, with three brothers, also of saintly memory, flourished there in the sixth century; whilst St Ives in Huntingdon appears to be named after a fabulous Persian bishop.

180. 2. Trygvier: Tréguier in Brittany.
10. "ensue": imitate.
13. "right civil" (Fr. "droit civil"): civil law.

181. 5. "the Bible." We so constantly hear of the non-reading or even suppression of the Bible in the Middle Ages that it is always interesting to meet with a passage like this, where the familiar and incessant use of the Bible by an ecclesiastic is mentioned as something praiseworthy indeed but not extraordinary. As a matter of fact the chief religious writings of the Middle Ages (*e.g.* those of S. Bernard) are simply saturated with the thoughts and language of Scripture.
6. "portos," also "portesse" (Fr. *port-hors*): a thing to "carry outside," portable breviary. The breviary, or compendium of the "divine office," consists of an arrangement for every day in the year of psalms, readings from the Scriptures, and other devotional exercises.
9. "parishens" (Fr. *paroissiens*; Lat. *parochiani*). The Modern English form "parishioners" is just as incorrect as "fruiterers," or "upholsterers."
17. "mystery." This is not our modern word "mystery," but rather our modern word "ministry"; it is from Latin *ministerium*, not *mysterium*. So in "mystery-play," which is the play given by a *ministerium* or trade-guild.
24. "admirable or wonderful." Note the frequent use of such doublets. So *infra* "*columbe* or *dove*."

182. 29. "sergeant": merely a doublet of *servant*. Lat. *servientem*.
31. "encheson": occasion. See "S. Louis," note p. 287.

183. 3. It is deserving of note, that the humility and meekness of the Saint did not prevent his displaying a high degree of courage and resolution.
23 "with pain": unwillingly.

184. 6. "myschaunte" (Mod. Fr. *méchant*): wretched, guilty; pr. part. of *méchoir* (Latin *minus* and *cadere*).

185. 11. "indifferently": without distinction of persons.
17. "Sudaries": shrouds; Lat. *sudaria*: *sudor*=sweat.

186. 7. "coles." "Cole" differs from "kail" or "kale" just as "whole" differs from "hale" and "home" from "hame": it is south against north.

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186. 22. "beneurely": the French *bienheureusement*; from Latin *bonum augurium*. So "beneurous" (*infra*) is the French *bienheureux*: "maleurous," *malheureux*.

187. 11. "forsenery": madness. So in French *forcené*, in Italian *forsennato*, mean "mad"; from Latin *foris* (outside) and *sensus*. Observe the pair-words—"forsenery or madness."

188. 17. "siecle." An attempt to bring in the French word: Latin *sæculum*.

S. THOMAS OF CANTERBURY

190. 5. "shrewd boy": mischievous boy; such as at the present day also would be apt to note "strange array" in the streets.

24. This story of the birth of the saint is not found in Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda*, nor in the oldest and best English biographers.

191. 1. Henry II. of Anjou, King of England from 1154 to 1189, was son of Matilda, daughter of Henry I. of England. Matilda was first married to the Emperor, hence was commonly known throughout her life as "the Empress." By a second marriage with Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, she became the mother of Henry. After she had waged for nineteen years an unsuccessful combat with Stephen of Blois, her son was, on the death of the latter, acknowledged king.

The misprint "emperor's" has here crept into some English editions.

23. "pall" (Lat. *pallium*): a kind of stole or scarf of white wool marked with black crosses, the peculiar emblem of archbishops, sent them (as in the text) by the Pope.

192. 2. "the king could him great thanks." "I can (or "con") thanks" was a fairly common expression for "I am grateful." Students of Greek will recall the exactly parallel *χάριν εἰδέναι*.

193. 4. By immemorial Christian custom the trial of ecclesiastics accused of crimes belonged to the ecclesiastical courts, not to the civil. In disorderly times the reverse process would have practically meant the terrorizing of ecclesiastics by powerful lay princes whom often the clergy would find it their first duty to withstand. "clerks" = clerics.

25. "to run in": to incur—as we now would say.

194. 19. "bedemen": beadsmen; persons bound to pray for a benefactor. A.S. *bedu* or *gebed*, "a prayer"; Mod. Eng. *bead*, with a strange shifting of meaning.

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194. 27. Two different grammatical constructions seem here combined; *for* serving both as conjunction and preposition.

29. "assoiled": absolved. Latin *absolvere*. Quite a different word is *soil* "*stain*," a doublet of *sully*; O. French *soillier*, perhaps ultimately from Latin *sus*, a pig.

195. 9. "meiny": household, or bodyguard. O. French *maisniée*, O. Italian *masnada*; Low Lat. *mansionata*, a houseful of servants; ultimately from Latin *mansio* and *manere* ("to remain").

196. Observe "thou" used in anger by the King; "ye" deferentially by the Saint.

197. 14. S. Gilbert, called of Sempringham, had founded there a celebrated monastery—one of thirteen established by him. He was alive in the days of S Thomas, having lived (it is said) from 1083 to 1189. The only monastic order of English origin, the Gilbertines, never spread beyond England.

14. "chevissed": managed, contrived. O. French *chevir*. Low Latin *capire*; Class. Lat. *capere*.

17. "Complain on him." This phrase would now be regarded as an Irishism.

198. 32. There does not seem to be evidence of this permanent privilege for S. Mark's day having been granted to Canterbury.

199. 1. "pardon": an indulgence attached to the festival.

23. "Pounteney": Pontigny.

200. 21. "foredo": destroy; better spelt "fordo," like "forlorn" "for wearied." *For*, like the German "-ver," is here an intensive prefix.

201. 14. "accurse": excommunicate. They were naturally treated as outlaws of the Church, since they directly assailed her rights and her property.

202. 26. "But if thou assoil": unless thou assoil.

203. 1. "Sir" translates "Dominus" as a title of priests; so in Shakespeare: "Dom" or "Don" corresponds in other languages.

9. "cruel": not in the modern sense, but = fierce.

14. "stirred": knocked about on the pavement.

204. 13. "quire." This spelling lingered on into the nineteenth century alongside "choir." From Latin *chorus*. The other word "quire" is from Lat. *quaternum*—anything fourfold.

15. "*Lætabitur justus*": "The just shall rejoice in the Lord, and shall hope in him, and all the upright in heart shall be glorified." Psalm 63 (al. 64).

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King Henry II. did public penance for his share in the murder of Thomas à Becket, and in a very short time the martyr became an object of the most marked popular veneration not only in England but over the continent. For Chaucer and his contemporaries he was "the holy blisful martir" and the goal of many a pilgrimage. His determined resistance to royal encroachments did not move any ill-will on the part of English kings till the time of Henry VIII. It was inevitable that that monarch's career of determined effort to subjugate Church and State should bring him into conflict with all that the great Archbishop of Canterbury stood for. As a matter of fact, in 1538 Henry decreed and carried out an elaborate process of unsainting or decanonizing S. Thomas. His name was to be erased from all liturgical or religious books; none was to dare call him "Saint": his ashes were dispersed, his magnificent shrine broken up, and the treasures accumulated by the piety of generations seized to swell the tyrant's coffers. The biographies and legends of the saint were torn, defaced and burnt; no one was allowed to possess them. Hence in old copies of the *Golden Legend* it is rare to find the life of Thomas à Becket represented by anything more than the remains of torn pages. Occasionally one finds it (as a half measure) scored out with pen or pencil!

S. LOUIS, KING OF FRANCE

This life is not one of those contained in the original *Legenda Aurea*. Its material is derived from memoirs written by contemporaries, notably from those of the king's vassal and companion, the Sire de Joinville. The signs of translation from the French are numerous, and the style falls below the average of Caxton's Lives.

205. 3. S. Louis was born in 1215, and died in 1270. His father was Louis VIII., his mother Blanche of Castile, who, being left regent after her husband's death, displayed rare gifts of prudence and firmness.

13. "As the young Solomon" who says, in the *Book of Wisdom* (c. viii. v. 19): "puer eram ingeniosus, et sortitus sum animam bonam" (Vulgate version).

14. The "Albigenses": against whom Louis VIII. and others undertook a crusade in the name of religious truth and unity, were not so much heretics as deniers and assailants of certain fundamental Christian beliefs. In mediæval polity heresy and unbelief

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were regarded as offences against the State and civil society, and therefore were proceeded against *vi et armis*.

206. 19. "Sauts": assaults; the omission of *l* is French; Lat. *adsaltus*. "Watch": watchful cunning and hostility.

207. 5. "the more foul he reputed him." It belongs to the Christian spirit to recognize how useless are even our best labours to God, who is independent of them, and how worthless are human efforts towards sanctity or any desirable end apart from the concurrence of divine help. The practical recognition of these facts constitutes the virtue of humility. Advancing in this virtue, as they advanced in interior enlightenment, the Saints became—not as might be superficially supposed—more timid, depressed and hesitating, but on the contrary more joyous, resolute and fearless. They had (to apply a fine expression of Holy Scripture) "changed their strength"; they felt within them the growing power of God replace mere human feebleness.

9. "Semblably": seemingly, reverentially.

208. 11. "Wherefore . . . about." A rather unpleasant specimen of the fifteenth-century long sentence. It drags along without unity and might stop equally well at almost any point. But see Appendix.

25. "encheson": occasion. The two words are doublets, the former representing a corrupt French form, the latter a purer form, of the Latin *occasionem*.

29. "Chartre": prison; Lat. *carcerem*.

209. 28. "ardently or burningly": observe the pair.

210. 5. "money, pecunies or silver": for readers of 1480, a triad of synonyms. As to "silver," compare the present French use of *argent*.

11. "beguines": women living together in retirement and religious practices, but not bound by the strictness of vows and monastic rule.

19. "hospitals": in the Middle Ages, refuges of various kinds for poor and distressed people, travellers, etc.

211. 8. "friars predicators and minors": Dominicans and Franciscans.

18. "grew": promoted. We still say: "he grew flowers."

214. 18. "his seven psalms": the seven penitential psalms.

S. THOMAS AQUINAS

217. 4. "Sicily." Aquino, the birthplace of S. Thomas, is near Naples. The region has sometimes been known as the Kingdom of Sicily. When still called "Aquinum" the town was the birthplace of the satiric poet Juvenal. S. Thomas was of the Counts of Aquino, connected by blood with the imperial family. To become a Dominican he gave up the most splendid prospects. Afterwards he persisted in refusing the ecclesiastical dignities which his rare qualities caused to be pressed on him.

Thomas was born probably in 1227, and died in 1274.

7. "Friars Preachers": founded by S. Dominic de Guzman in 1215. He was a man of amiable though ardently zealous character. We see from our text what a hold his memory and special ideals took on characters like Thomas Aquinas.

13. "Child": he was a youth of 17 or 18. "Child" in Middle English was often used for a young man or knight; so in Byron's "Childe Harold."

218. 23. 'Truants" (French *truands*): itinerants, poor wanderers; from a Celtic word, represented by Irish *truagh*, "wretched."

219. 4. Though S. Thomas was thus spiritual, he is said nevertheless to have been a man of extremely bulky figure. Partly for this reason, but rather because of his slow and silent ways at the beginning of his studies, he was called "the dumb ox" by his fellow-students.

6. Caxton has here missed a line of the original.

220. 4. "Chancellor of heaven": S. Peter, to whom the keys of jurisdiction over souls were entrusted. "Doctor of divine Scripture": S. Paul, who, ravished to heaven, was shown there "secret things, which man may not utter."

25. "Fossenew": Fossanuova, near Terracina.

222. 1. "What he had": what ailed him. In French (the language from which this life is taken) they would say: "qu'avez vous?"

223. 15. "Austin": or Augustine, the illustrious Bishop of Hippo.

Thomas Aquinas was the chief of those teachers—often spoken of as "the scholastics"—who in the Middle Ages built up a vast and well-ordered edifice of Christian philosophy and theology upon foundations

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chiefly taken from the philosophy of Aristotle. His principal work—though he himself describes it as but a compendium for beginners—is his *Summa Theologica*. For clearness of vision and mental grasp, for sureness of logic and calm power of synthesis, this and other writings of the "Angelic Doctor" have never been surpassed. After being involved in the discredit which fell upon many things mediæval and Catholic during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, their merits have come in our day to be recognized by capable and candid thinkers of all philosophic schools.

S. FRANCIS

S. Francis of Assisi died in 1226 and was solemnly canonized in 1228. In twenty-four years after his death the friars (frati, frères, "brothers") of the order he had founded numbered no less than two hundred thousand and were spread over Europe. Nevertheless he did not (apparently) come in time to form the subject of one of De Voragine's original biographies. The gap was soon filled; but it is regrettable that the biography which Caxton and his assistants found in the later editions of the *Legenda Aurea* is less a well-ordered history than a series of anecdotes, and recounts much too briefly the saint's earlier life.

227. 1. "impetred": obtained by prayer; Lat. *impetrare*.
13. "The friars Greek": this is a curious blunder for "the friars at Torre del Greco," a small town in Umbria.

230. 15. "the signs of his crucifying": the *stigmata* or marks of the nails and spear in the hands, feet and side. That such marks (sometimes accompanied by bleeding) have appeared in the bodies of some holy persons there can be no reasonable doubt. That, in the case of these persons or others, natural causes may produce such markings must also be admitted. That supernatural causes have sometimes been the sole or partial explanation there is nothing to disprove, and there are (in some cases) good reasons for believing.

231. 13. "The Lord Hostience": *Dominus Hostiensis*, the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia (Tiberina), Ugolinus, afterwards Pope Gregory IX.

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234. 9. Similar legends of kindly relations with the lower animals occur in connection with other saints—as, for example, the Irish Columba and the Irish Brigid. Columba, a voluntary exile from Eirinn, sent loving greetings thither by migratory birds who visited his island cell at Iona. S. Brigid, the most famous of S. Patrick's immediate disciples, used to call to her the wild birds, and all, even the shy wild-ducks, would come as they were summoned. She would caress and pet them and then send them forth again to praise God in liberty.

235. 8. "Shere-Thursday": Thursday in Holy Week; so called because it was a favourite day for getting hair and beard trimmed after the Lenten period of neglect of the body.

20. "In the labour of the earth." This is a curious Caxtonian blunder for "in the Land of Labour"—in Terra di Lavoro, a region of Southern Italy.

Writers of various shades of thought, notably within the past fifty years, have vied with each other in praising the character and influence of S. Francis of Assisi. Among other things there have been hailed in him an anticipation of the best ideals of modern democracy, and a gentle humanity which has been sadly missed in the struggles of modern progress. Others, taking a still higher standpoint, have justly admired the rare combination found in him of extreme contempt for earthly possessions with the intensest love of all God's creatures, his pity for the suffering, his unselfish delight in all goodness and beauty whereby he was led incessantly to praise goodness and beauty in their eternal Source.

Dr Creighton, the late historian and bishop, thought that "the greatest of all centuries was the thirteenth—that age which produced Dante, S. Francis, S. Louis, and Edward the First" (*Life and Letters*, by Mrs Creighton).

Dr Jörgensen, perhaps the greatest living Danish man of letters, has become not only the best modern biographer of the "Poverello," but also the enthusiastic practical adherent of his religious and spiritual ideals.

M. Sabatier writes in the Introduction to his *Vie de St François*: "These early Franciscans were of the violent ones who resolve to storm and capture the Kingdom of Heaven. When, dissatisfied with the frivolities and sterile concerns of the every-day world, we find ourselves face to face with these men, we are at once humbled and uplifted; for we

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suddenly discover hidden in human hearts powers hitherto undivined and a music which we had not dreamt of but which they can render."

S. CLARE

This life of Caxton's is not one of those contained in the original *Legenda Aurea*. Its somewhat too sugary style is not that of Jacobus de Voragine. The chief source of Clare's biography, for Caxton's time and for ours, was a contemporary *Vita*; there were also the various records of S. Francis of Assisi and of the early Franciscans; also pontifical Bulls relating to the Franciscan rule.

S. Clare's father was Favorino Scifi, Count of Sasso-Rosso, a man of high birth and large possessions. Her mother was also of distinguished worldly position. At the age of eighteen the simple eloquence of S. Francis inflamed Clare with love and desire of heavenly things and with his own spirit of poverty and renouncement. In 1212 she fled from her family and vowed herself to a strict religious life. She died in 1253 at the age of fifty-nine.

237. 2. "Clare" (Italian *Chiara*; Latin *clara*): illustrious.
12. "she spared," etc.: she defrauded her own appetite and sent to the poor such things, etc.
21. "The hair": a shirt of coarse rough hair.

238. 18. "eurous": happy; French *heureux*.
28. "her hair." The cutting off of hair—"tonsure"—has been a sign of religious consecration since the fifth century A.D. It had been a sign of servile condition, and it was at first adopted by monks as a mark of humiliation and a symbol of the service of God; later it became a mark of the clerical state.

240. 23. It is a singular fact, illustrated again and again in the lives of men and women who aimed at keeping the body entirely subservient to the spirit, how very small a quantity of food will suffice to keep the human machine in good working order. Authorities on the spiritual life seem commonly to admit that in modern times a life of holiness does not demand or (in some cases) even admit of such extreme austerities as in past ages; this contention was put forward eloquently by Francis Thompson in his essay entitled "Health and Holiness." But it is probable that moderns in general would gain even in physical efficiency by eating much less than they do. It is historically certain that Saints in all centuries have accomplished great labours and results and reached extreme old

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age on food allowances which might seem to us to exceed hardly a starvation limit. S. Romuald, the founder of the austere Camaldolese monks, appears to have lived to the age of 120; S. Gilbert of Sempringham to 106. S. Paul and S. Antony, the first hermits, were centenarians. The modern S. Alphonsus Liguori, who, in addition to extreme asceticism, made a vow never to lose time and kept it, lived to be 92 and met death in full possession of his mental faculties. And we do not speak of Orientals.

241. 1. ' over-foul." Cleanliness was to be looked to, even amid Franciscan mortifications and poverty. It is a common error to imagine that the Christianity or monasticism of primitive and mediæval times was systematically or usually indifferent to cleanliness. At least as many facts may be quoted to dispel that opinion as to support it. Saints, no doubt, despised cleanliness in comparison with what they knew to be greater concerns, but in itself they valued it as a symbol and fitting companion of soul-purity. In their Rules they constantly encouraged and recommended order and cleanliness in all that concerned the religious house and its inmates.

What a mediæval bishop thought of Saturday-night " washings-up " and neat Sunday clothes may be gathered from this fragment of a twelfth-century biography :—

" It is the custom of Christians, venerating everywhere Sunday on account of our Lord's resurrection, on Saturdays rather than on other days to cleanse and refresh the body after the fatigues and sweats of labour, and to change soiled clothes for washed ones; that so with bodies as well as hearts the purer they may enter the Church, which is the earthly court of their King." (St Melanius; Bollandists, I. 334.)

26. " Maundy ": the washing of feet, etc., in memory of the Last Supper; from the words " Mandatum novum do vobis ": I give you a new commandment.

242. 16. " Surely ": confidently.

243. 16. " hills of flies ": huge masses of flies.
18. " wood men ": madmen.

245. 20. " hele ": keep secret; observe the pair in the text: A.S. *helan*; Germ. (*ver*) *hehlen*.

247. 29. " lead ": I do not see the point of this jibe.

249. 25. " corporals ": linen cloths on which the Blessed Sacrament is laid on the altar.

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250. 28. "comforted": strengthened; not at all in the modern sense, as the context shows.

253. 32. "lavas": excess, looseness; French *lavache*; same words as the modern adj. lavish. The sense of "flood" easily comes from Latin *lavare*.

254. 31. "mat": dull, heavy; German *matt*.

260. 16. "windowed": appears to mean fretted in open-work.

Clare was at once the unswervingly loyal disciple of Francis and his trusted counsellor. Even against the well-meant relaxations offered by popes she gently persisted in maintaining for her nuns his ideal of perfect poverty. At her convent in Assisi is still preserved as a precious relic and charter the unique "privilege" which she obtained from Gregory IX.—the privilege that her "Poor Clares" (as they were afterwards called) should never be compelled to accept possessions or revenues. It was she who encouraged Francis in his greatest difficulties, and urged him to continue his mission to the people at a time when he thought his vocation lay rather in a life of solitude and prayer. Her character seems to have combined great strength with gentleness. Her spiritual children in many places at the present day still maintain the strict poverty which she taught them to cherish.

APPENDIX

PUNCTUATION AND STYLE IN CAXTON

In Caxton's day a very simple system of punctuation harmonized with a much looser and less carefully ordered syntax than has become familiar to us in the prose of modern English writers. The complexities of punctuation have kept pace with the subtler shadings of syntactical arrangement. The application in modern editions of authors such as Caxton of the refined methods of modern punctuation renders the reading of them more easy and pleasant to us; but has the disadvantage of disguising from us not a little the essential simplicity and fluid syntax of fifteenth-century style—at least of Caxton's. These characteristics can only be realized when we have imagined away the punctuation or all but its simplest marks. Having, therefore, used modern punctuation throughout this edition, we think it desirable to append here a passage in literal transcription from a first edition of Caxton's own, with a view to illustrating the methods and syntactical effects of the original Caxtonian punctuation:

Certes hyt is a foule vyce in a preest the synne of couetyse / But fewe haue ben to fore thys tyme / and fewe ben yet but yf they ben attaynte therwyth / whereof hyt is grete pyte / syn hyt is so that auaryce is moder of all vyces / Whilis that the troians gadryd to gyder their gold and syluer and put hyt in the temple of mynerve to kepe vnto the tyme that hyt was alle assemblid. Hit playsid them to offre & make sacrefyse to theyr god Appolyn / And whan they hadd slayn many bestes for their sacrefyce and had put them vpon the Awter / And hadd sette fyre on them for to brenne them / Hit happend that ther cam there two meruayllis / the fyrste was that the fyre wold not alyghte ne brenne / for they began to make the fyre more than ten tymes / And alway hyt quenchid and myght neuer brenne the sacrefyce. The seconde myracle or meruaylle was whan they had appoynted the entraylles of the bestes for theyr sacrefyce / A grete Eygle descended fro the ayer cryyng gretly and toke wyth his feet the said entraylles and bare hem in to the shyppes of the grekes.

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